

To Alice from
Peter

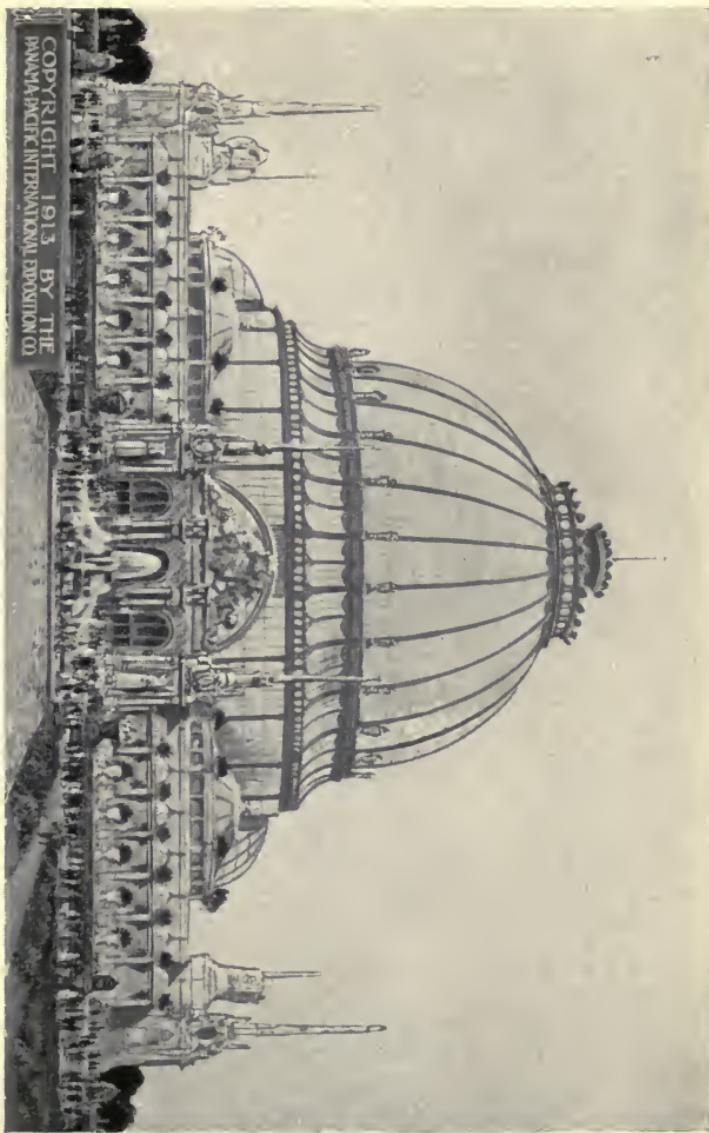
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TOWER OF JEWELS, P. P. I. E., San Francisco, 1915



PALACE OF HORTICULTURE, P. P. I. E., San Francisco, 1915

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ACROSS THE PLAINS IN '54

A STORY
FOR
YOUNG PEOPLE
OF
EARLY EMMIGRATION
TO
CALIFORNIA

BY
MANFORD ALLEN NOTT, Vt.

Second Edition
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PREFACE

In the preparation of this little book I had no thought of authorship; but simply to give a straightforward narrative—one that can be easily understood and appreciated by the young for whom it is intended. I make no apologies for the manner in which the different events have been brought together. I collected most of them while residing in California some years ago, and the big train spoken of, I remember when a small boy of ten. Some of those who formed a part of that outfit may still be living; if so, I hope that if this little book should fall into their hands they will pardon the mistakes, as so many years have passed and gone since then.

THE AUTHOR.

To my friends of early days this little book
is dedicated by the author.



MANFORD ALLEN NOTT

CHAPTER I.

Henry and Albert, Two Neighbor Boys, go to Council Bluffs to Join a Party of Emi- grants Going to California.

It was in the spring of 1854, a party of emigrants were collecting at a certain place on the Missouri River for the purpose of going to that far-famed country whose name had become a household word, namely, the Golden State of California.

I, Albert Mayhue, was at the time only twelve years old. My mother had been a widow two years.

I had three sisters: Molly, the oldest, had been married two years; Lucy, fourteen years old, and little Alice, aged ten, was my playmate. We were not very well off but succeeded in making a comfortable living by cultivating a small farm.

One of my neighbor's boys, Henry Zimmerman, lived with an old aunt, Mrs. Matilda Strong. We all called her Aunt Tildy. Aunt

Tildy had adopted Henry when he was only five years old. He was the only son of an only sister, hence the affection she lavished upon him. Henry was not spoiled by his over-indulgent aunt, but on the contrary was one of the best boys I ever knew, and the best friend I ever had. He was four years my senior, but not much larger, for I was very large for one of my age. He and I had hunted and fished together and attended the same school—at least the same school for some years—and were always particular chums. We would fight each other's battles—or at least, he would take my part and I his in all our little difficulties in the neighborhood.

It was in April in the aforesaid year that Henry came to my home and getting me off to one side, gave me this information:

“Albert, there is going to be a large emigration party going to California this spring and they are collecting at Council Bluffs, Iowa. They are going to cross the river the first of May and you know this is the twentieth of April. Now I am going with that outfit or burst a suspender, and I want you to go with me.”

"Well," I said, "will your aunt be willing for you to go? To tell you the truth I think my mother will never give her consent for me to go."

"Well I believe I can get the consent of Aunt Tildy; then you can get the consent of your mother. Now you go home with me and if Aunt Tildy lets me go, your mother can be more easily persuaded."

So that evening I asked mother to let me go home with Henry, and she said I could go. There wasn't much to do just then and so I wasn't losing much valuable time.

Henry had not yet said anything to his aunt in regard to his intentions, and when he spoke of going to California she came near throwing a fit.

"Why Henry Zimmerman! What ever put that into your head? Don't you know you ain't old enough to start away off to California; clean out of the world."

"Aunty, you know I am well able to take care of myself, and besides, we will be with a large emigration crowd. They are collecting now at Council Bluffs, and there will be at least 200 men and all well armed, and the Indians will never tackle a large crowd."

"You say 'we', Henry; who is going with you from this neighborhood?"

"Albert here, if his mother will let him."

"Well, don't you think for a moment his mother will let him go so far away from home. Why, only think, he is only twelve years old!"

"Yes," said Henry, "and almost as large as I am, and can shoot equally as well, and if it comes to a fight, I'll venture to say he will give as good an account of himself as any man in the crowd."

"Well, Henry, I don't want to let you go; you are the only man I have on the place except the hired men and you know they are not always to be trusted like you."

This almost floored Henry, but the lure of that far-famed Eldorado, California, was too much for him and he again came to the front.

"Aunt Tildy, I have always done everything you told me to do; I've never disobeyed you in my life, and now that I have the best chance I will ever get to go, I don't think you ought to object, when it's the first time I ever asked you for any extended privilege."

"I know it, Henry, and that is why I hate to refuse to let you go, but I suppose I will have

to give in, for I know you will never be satisfied now."

Henry caught her around the neck and hugged and kissed her over and over, for he loved his aunt as much as if she had been his own mother; and she was the same as a mother to him.

"Now, Albert," said Aunt Tildy, "I guess you are as able to take care of yourself as Henry, but I don't believe your mother will give her consent to let you go, for you are her only son and she thinks the world and all of you."

"I know," I said, "but I believe she will be willing when she understands how everything will be. Henry and I will tell her about the big crowd that will be going, and I don't think she will be very obstinate. Now I want Henry to go home with me in the morning, and I think he and I together can persuade her to let me go."

The next morning Henry and I went over to my house and as soon as we arrived there broached the subject.

I can't dwell on this painful scene; suffice it to say I gained my point, and it was agreed that Henry and I should start for the rendez-

vous on the following Monday. I was figity all the time. The fact is, I wanted to go and I didn't want to go. My little sister Alice cried nearly all the time and I came near doing the same.

My mother fixed me up the best she could by mending some of my old clothes. She said they would do for every day use.

Henry and I agreed to meet at one of the neighbors where our respective roads met, so that neither one would have to go by the other's house, as either one would have been out of our way. Old Uncle Andy Tonnyhill lived here, whom we both had known all our lives, and we wanted to bid the old couple good-bye.

I shall never forget that sad morning. My sisters were all assembled to bid me good-bye, as well as my brother-in-law, Billy Goodman, and several of our neighbors. I could hardly stand it to part from any of my family, but it was ten times harder when I came to part from my mother and little Alice. She clung to my neck and could hardly be separated from me. Finally our parting was ended, and I climbed onto old Steady as I called him, and again bidding all god-bye I rode away.

Henry had arrived at our meeting place a few minutes ahead of me and was talking to the old man and his wife when I rode up.

Uncle Andy said, "Hallow, young man; Henry here, tells me you are going to California too."

"Yes, I'm going," I said, "and I'll bring you a gold bush all in full bloom, for they say gold grows on bushes in California."

"Well, if it does it's all been gathered long ago, you'll not get any."

"Well, I'll dig up the end it grows from then."

"Well, now my boy," said Uncle Andy, "you are entirely too young to go so far from your mother. I know you are a big strong lad for your age but you hain't got the experience you know. Henry here is quite a bit older than you and he is not old enough for so long a trip."

"Well, Uncle Andy, if we haven't got the experience we will be with those who have," said Henry; "you know we will not be alone."

"Well, boys, I don't want to discourage you any; I guess you will get along allright."

We then bade the old couple good-bye and rode away.

Our first night's camp was on a little creek about thirty miles from home. We bought forage at a nearby house and camped out. The next night we stayed at a farm house. One of the boys, the oldest son, about Henry's age, wanted to go with us when he learned where we were going, but his father would not hear of it. But the boy was insistent. However, the old gentleman was obdurate and would not give his consent. I thought when I saw the boy turn away at this rebuff that there would be a missing boy from that neighborhood before long, and the sequel proved I was correct.

The next day we crossed the Missouri and in three days more we were at the Bluffs.

As we rode into camp we noticed a couple of large tents just to our right and I said to Henry, "There is a pretty nice looking camp, let's try to get in with them." Our intention was to get in with some family and if they didn't have anything we could do to pay our passage, we would pay in money, for we had enough for that at any rate. We had not yet turned to go up to the tents when an oldish-like man stepped out of one of the tents and after taking a look started toward us. He threw up one hand as though he wanted to

speak to us and we stopped to wait for the old gentleman to come up. He came to Henry and laid his hand on his horse's neck and said: "You boys look pretty good to me, and if you are going with this outfit, how would you like to join my family? I have a bunch of cattle to drive and no one to drive them but my girls. I and my wife drive the two teams and that leaves the cattle all to the girls."

That was just what suited us and we told him so.

"Well, then, come up to camp and unsaddle your horses and we'll talk the matter over."

As we rode up to the tents a young girl, not more than thirteen or fourteen at most, stepped out of a tent. I looked at Henry and saw that he was bewildered, and I certainly was startled, for I never in my young life had seen as lovely a girl as she. Her skin was fair, her eyes as blue as the skies, and hair lovely and brown as a berry.

Just as we reached the tents another girl came out and stood beside her sister—for it was evident they were sisters. If the one we first beheld was lovely, how can I describe the second one? If it were possible for the younger

one to be ten times prettier than her elder sister, then I will say ten, for in all my sixty-five years of life I have never beheld one so lovely. Her eyes were blue, large and brilliant, with an expression so sweet and winning that one could hardly keep from gathering her up and making a break for tall timber. That was somewhat my feeling at the time. The only marked difference in complexion was the hair. While the elder one's hair was a lovely brown, the little one had hair the color of gold and it hung down to her waist. To draw it mildly, which I have been trying to do all the time and can't, I will simply say she was as lovely as an angel.

The old gentleman had inquired our names as we were unsaddling our horses and then introduced us to his daughters as Nellie Hendrix and Molly, her sister. Then to his wife as Polly, "And now, boys, I want we should get acquainted as soon as possible. My name is William, but everyone calls me Billy or Bill and some old Bill Hendrix."

I would never think of calling him Bill or old Bill, for to look into his eyes or his wife's either, one would warm to them both in spite of oneself, for more benevolent faces one never beheld.

Mr. Hendrix called us into one of the tents and showed us where to put our blankets, "And," said he, "here is some more bedding for I see you boys haven't got enough, and make it down in this corner. That's my bed over there. My wife and the girls sleep in the other tent."

We thanked the old gentleman for his kindness and walked out to look for our horses.

"You needn't be uneasy about your horses, boys, we have someone out all the time keeping an eye on them."

When night drew nigh, the girls placed chairs outside in the cool evening breezes, for the weather was warm. We had had supper served about sundown and now when everything had been cleared up we collected around one of the tent doors and began a general conversation.

Mrs. Hendrix wanted to know where we were from.

"We are from Blank County, Missouri," Henry told them, "and were raised in the same neighborhood."

Turning to me she said, "And your name is Mayhue; are your parents still living?"

"No, only my mother," I told her.

"Where was your mother from?"

"Illinois."

"What is your mother's given name?"

"Emily," I replied.

She gave a slight start, and said, "What was her maiden name?"

I told her it was Johnson.

She made a grab at me and came near pulling me off my chair, and cried, "Why, Emily Johnson was one of my schoolmates and we were the closest of friends. Why, just think of it, here is my best friend's boy right here and, don't you know, you look like your mother did when she was your age."

"Well, mother, don't eat him up," said little Molly, while her eyes were snapping, for she was greatly interested in our talk.

"I can't help it, Molly, just to think my old friend Emily Johnson's boy is here.

"I am going to take you into my special keeping," she declared, "and not allow you to run headlong into danger. Now, Albert, you must write your mother before we leave this camp, and I will add a few lines. She will be surprised to hear from her old friend Polly Davenport. We haven't heard from one another for many years. The last letter I received

from her was just after she married telling me whom she married and where they were living. But she was living in Illinois then."

"Yes," I said, "near Decatur, but they moved soon after that to Missouri. I and my sisters were all born in Missouri."

"Then you have sisters. How many have you?"

"Three," I replied.

"What are their names?" said Nellie, and this was the first time she had spoken, and on becoming better acquainted with her I found it was her nature to be somewhat taciturn.

I told her my sister's names were Mary, or Molly we always called her; she was married, and the next one was Lucy, fourteen years old, and Alice, ten years old.

"And how old are you?" Mr. Hendrix asked.

"I am twelve," I said, "and some two months past."

"You are pretty young to start on such a long trip," said he, "but you will be in a pretty good crowd and I guess you will get along all right."

They wanted to know how old Henry was and he told them he was sixteen and still grow-

ing. They all laughed at this for Henry was not much larger than me.

“You will have to grow faster than you’ve been growing,” said Mr. Hendrix, “if you keep ahead of this boy,” meaning me.

Our talk lasted until far into the night when we bade each other good night and retired.



CHAPTER II.

They Meet With a Congenial Family and Are Content—Albert Takes a Smart Aleck Down in a Shooting Contest.

The following morning Henry and I were up very early and strolled out to look for our horses. We found them feeding not very far away, and seemingly very well contented. We also went down and passed through a part of the camp. Everybody was up by this time and at work.

Some were repairing harness, some repairing their wagons, and others again were shoeing horses or taking off old shoes to reset or replace them with new ones. We stopped and talked with one now and then, and found that some were from Eastern Iowa, some from Illinois, while others were from our old State, Missouri. The Iowa contingent, with sixteen wagons and forty-five men, not all of whom were married—in fact, only six had families—had elected an old man who had made one trip to California and back, as captain of their out-

fit. None of the others had thought of organizing. They did not seem to think it necessary. This man who had been elected captain of the Iowa emigrants, and whose name was Edwards—I never heard his given name—wanted to organize the whole camp into one compact command, but there was too much indifference manifested to come to any definite understanding, so the matter dragged along and nothing had been done.

“Hello, young feller, you going to California too?” bawled a tall gawk of a young man at me as we passed along.

I told him I was.

“Have you got a gun?”

“Yes, I sure have,” I said.

“What can you do shootin’ Injins?”

“Oh, I think I can hit one if he’ll stand right still for a minute or two.”

“Haw, haw, you shoot Injuns! Why you couldn’t hit a flock of barns if they all flew up in a bunch.”

“What will you bet,” I asked, “that I can’t peg it over you any distance you mention?” By this time I was getting a little bit roiled at his arrogance.

"I'll take you up, young man, and take the conceit out of you at the same time.

Henry had become very much interested by this time and advised me to take him down a notch or two, for he knew I could shoot, and told him to get his gun and come down to the river where we could put up a target where we would not be apt to do mischief by missing the target altogether. So we returned to camp to get our rifles, and when we started off Mrs. Hendrix wanted to know what we were going to do.

"I am going to shoot a match with a fellow that thinks I'm too small to use a rifle, but I'm going to show him I can shoot."

"Well, don't gamble, Albert, it is a bad habit and once you get in practice it will be hard to quit."

"No," I replied, "I won't bet anything, but I want to beat him anyhow."

By this time a part of the men had heard of the match to be shot and when we reached the river quite a number had assembled on the ground.

"Why," said one of the men, "Is that the boy you are going to shoot with, Dick?"

"Yes, he thinks he can shoot, but I want to show him he can't shoot for owl grease."

The ground where we had assembled was smooth and level with a cottonwood tree standing here and there, making it an ideal place for the business. One of the trees was selected to place the mark on and 40 yards stepped off, and the shooting began, but first we threw up a twobit piece to see who would get the first shot. I saw we were going to have quite an audience, for the people were stringing out from camp to see what was going on down by the river. My nerves were getting kind of shaky, but when I saw Mr. Hendrix and the girls coming I was determined then to beat Mr. Frisky Dick or never poise a rifle again. This was rather a rash vow to make, but I made it to myself, and no one knew, you see.

It fell to my opponent to have the first shot. I was glad of it, for I wanted to see how well he could shoot, but I was a little afraid he would purposely make a poor shot to draw me on, and get a bet out of me. But I was not much uneasy about that, for I never bet seriously in my life.

He had a very nicely made rifle, and was very proud of it. My rifle was old, for my

father had owned it for twenty years, and at his death the gun naturally fell to me, and I had improved my opportunities, and had become a crack shot.

Dick now stepped to the line that had been drawn on the ground for us to toe, with the forward foot when shooting, and threw his rifle to his shoulder in a nochalant sort of way as though he didn't have to use any precaution in shooting with a mere boy, and blazed away.

Two men were chosen to judge the shooting, and as soon as he fired they ran to the tree and measured the distance from the target center to the bullet hole. He had missed the center about three inches—not very good shooting to say the least.

Now it was my turn. Before I raised my gun to my shoulder I happened to glance toward the Hendrix girls. They were both looking at me with a great deal of interest and expectancy and I was sure they wanted me to beat the other fellow on account of his arrogant manners.

I was a quick shot for my father had always told me never to hold too long on a mark, for if I did the mark would get to dodging around, and the longer I held the harder it

would be to take accurate aim. My practice had been to take aim at a point just below the spot, then raise up quickly and as soon as the bead covered the spot, touch the trigger.

When I raised my rifle to my shoulder this advice, as it always did, came to mind, and I acted upon it.

At the crack of the rifle the spot disappeared. It was made by sticking a piece of white paper about one inch square on a black board over a cross mark for the center.

As soon as the judges reached the tree, they cried out, "Center!"

It was no surprise to me for when I touched the trigger I had a perfect aim on the spot. I knew that old rifle never played her bullets.

When the announcement was made that I had driven center I again looked toward the Hendrix girls and saw them smiling and clapping their hands, as in fact every one with a few exceptions were doing the same. To satisfy every one the board was brought up to the crowd and examined by all. It could be seen, however, by everyone, that I had made a center shot, by the vanishing of the white spot at the report of my gun.

This young man was from Illinois, and thought because he had killed a few squirrels and rabbits he could shoot. I was raised in an exceptional game country and hunted since I was nine years old, and had killed a few deer and a great many turkeys, squirrels and rabbits, to say nothing of many target shootings that I had done.

After the target had been examined, it was taken back to the tree and tacked up again.

"Now, Dick," said one of his friends, "you've got to tie him or make a little better shot than he did, and you have just a quarter of an inch to go on. If you tie, you will have to beat him next shot or you will be even."

He stepped up to the line and raised his rifle to his shoulder and held it a few seconds, then lowered it.

I could see he was a little bit rattled. Then he tried it again. This time he fired quick, and again the paper vanished.

I thought sure he had either tied or beaten me.

As soon as the judges had reached the tree they hallooed back that they couldn't find the bullet hole.

The tree we had been shooting at was not more than ten inches in diameter. The board was untouched, and upon close examination it was clear he had missed the tree also. Then a general laugh went around. The braggart had nothing to say and pretty soon left the crowd and returned to his camp. One of his friends told me after, that he had done no more bragging about shooting.

The target we were shooting at was made in the old fashioned way and is like this: a board is blackened in the fire; then a cross mark is cut with a knife; that cross is the center. Then a paper is placed over the cross and that is the object shot at. The paper is usually stuck on with spittle and when a bullet strikes it, it flies away.

Mr. Hendrix said he would like for me to try again at the same mark. I shot twice more and made good shots, but not so good as the first one; it was because I was not screwed up to as high pitch as at the first.

Henry tried it then and did even better than I, for he knocked center the second shot.

“Mr. Hendrix,” said one of the men, “if we get into a fight with the Indians, those boys will do good work.”

"Yes, if they don't get rattled they surely will do good work," he replied.

This was our second day after reaching the big emigrant camp, and tomorrow the crossing was to begin.

That afternoon Mrs. Hendrix, the two girls and Henry and I went fishing and had fisherman's luck as usual. Our catch was naught, multiplied by nothing.

We were on our way home when we saw coming up the road a solitary horseman. We could see he had a roll of blankets tied on behind his saddle, and Molly said, "There comes another addition to our party."

That proved to be the case for it was no other than our young friend of the road-side inn where Henry and I stopped on the second night out from home.

"Well, so you did come sure enough," said Henry, as he rode up to where we were waiting.

"Yes," he said, "and ain't you the boys that stayed at our house a few nights ago?"

"Yes; did the old gentleman give his consent at last?"

"Yes, but I had to promise him I would

come right back home if the emigrants had gone when I got here."

"Well," I said, "you won't have to go back for they are all here yet, but you have come in the nick of time for we cross the river tomorrow."

We introduced him to Mrs. Hendrix and the girls; he seemed to be struck with Nellie, and I think he fell in love with her right away.

When we reached the camp Mrs. Hendrix asked him to alight and tie his horse to one of the wagons that were standing near the tents.

Just then Mr. Hendrix came around in front and said something about our fisherman's luck.

Henry introduced our new friend and Mr. Hendrix wanted to know if he was bound for California, too.

He said he was if he could find someone that would take him in. He said he had money to pay his way but wanted to get in with some one to stay with to haul his bedding.

"I guess you can stay with us. I want another man to help drive the cattle anyhow. So turn your horse loose; he can't run off. We have herders out all the time keeping an eye on all the loose stock."

That evening as we sat out near the entrance of the girls' tent we asked them to sing. They both denied being very good at singing. "Now, Nellie," said her mother, "you and Mollie can both sing and why do you both say you can't?"

"Well, ma, you have given us away and I guess we will have to sing now."

So they sang an old song that I had heard my mother sing many times.

My mother was a very good singer, but I never heard the song sung as well as the girls sang it that evening. I said an old song; it is old now, but not at that time. My mother had learned it only a year or two before. The first verse ran as follows:

Lay up nearer, brother, nearer,
For my limbs are growing cold,
And thy presence seemeth dearer;
As thy arms around me fold.
I am dying, brother, dying.
Soon you'll miss me from your side,
And my form will soon be lying
'Neath the ocean's briny tide.

Before they had sang the song half through I was crying. I couldn't help it, because it reminded me so much of my mother and sisters.

When they had finished the song their

mother said, "Now, girls, don't sing such mournful songs as that. Don't you see Albert is crying?"

I told her it was because it reminded me of home, for I had heard my mother and sisters sing it so often.

"Your oldest sister's name is the same as mine," said Molly, "but I think Lucy and Alice are so much prettier names than mine."

"No one likes his own name," said Mr. Hendrix; "my name is William and I think it is very homely and very common."

"It's common all right," I said, "but I am partial to it for it is my father's name also. My mother thinks Emily is the ugliest name in the world, but I think it is the prettiest because it is my mother's name."

"That's right, Albert," said Mrs. Hendrix, "I see you think a great deal of your mother!"

After singing a few more songs, and Henry had played several tunes on his violin, for he had carried that loved instrument with him, tied on his saddle horn, all the way from home, it was growing late and we retired for the night.

CHAPTER III.

The Emigrants Cross the River—Little Molly Comes Near Drowning, but Albert Plunges in and Saves Her—the Boys go Hunting and Kill Two Fine Bucks.

It was the first of May when we began to cross the Missouri River. Mr. Hendrix was well satisfied that it would be impossible for all the wagons and stock to be crossed in one day, so he made no preparations.

Henry, and I, and Jim Brown, our newest acquisition, busied ourselves helping others to get their wagons on to the boat. We worked all day and only crossed about half the wagons and teams. The riding horses were driven in and made to swim.

Just across on the west side a little town had been started a short time before, and the young fellows of this settlement took delight in helping and rendered considerable service.

Early on the following morning the crossing was resumed; and by noon most of the wagons

and teams were over. Mr. Hendrix told Jim and I and Henry to drive the cattle up near the camp to be ready to cross as soon as all the wagons and teams had been ferried over. The intention was to drive them up to the river two or three hundred yards and start them in; small boats with three men each were to take them over, one to row the boat and the other two with whips to drive and keep them going.

As soon as dinner was over we—Mr. Hendrix having already hitched up—drove one wagon down to the river, then leaving Mrs. Hendrix to see to that one, returned for the other, and while the boys and I and both the girls kept the cattle together, he crossed the river; and then returned to help us. Three or four of the other men also stayed on the east side to help with the cattle. Mr. Hendrix fetched one of his horses back and saddled up to assist also. When everything was ready we started the cattle up the river. One boat was returned to take the men and horses over that was kept to take the big herd, then take to the big boat, and the two small boats would keep the cattle going while the men and the saddle horses were ferried over, and landed just after the herd.

As soon as the cattle were started in the river they began to balk. There were ten men and two girls doing all that lay in their power to do but it seemed we could never start them in; when one got in a few feet it would turn and keep the others back. This was kept up for half an hour, until finally the old bell cow took the lead and soon was swimming for dear life.

The river was high and still rising. The old cow that wore the bell seemed to know what was wanted and never turned but kept straight on. Most of the others followed her, but a few of the younger ones turned back and showed a determination to go back to the Eastern shore. I and Molly had ridden into the river close together; she was a little in the lead, and just to my left. We were getting to pretty deep water. Her pony being smaller than mine was now breast deep. It was just here her pony stumbled over something imbedded in the sand and fell forward throwing her over his head into still deeper water. She went out of sight instantly. I was stunned for a moment, but recovering as quickly I placed one foot on my horse's neck and leaped over his head and plunged after her.

I caught hold of her arm and attempted to touch bottom but failed. As I arose holding to her I heard shouting and screaming. Mr. Hendrix was making for me as fast as his horse could come, but Henry, being much nearer, reached me first, and catching me by the coat collar pulled me around so I could touch the ground and keep my head out of water. I still had hold of Molly's arm and when I found I could reach the bottom and walk on it and keep my mouth above the water, I gathered her up onto my shoulder. Henry wanted to take her, but I said no, that I could get along all right now, and soon waded to shore. As I set her down on a hillock, I whispered, "You little darling girl, I would have saved you or drowned in the attempt."

"I know you would, Albert, and I love you." And, dear reader, that love has kept bright and shining for more than fifty years. Molly was only a little girl of ten, but she had the spirit of a woman.

Her sister now came and led her to the boat. The men had got the stray cattle started across the river again. Seeing those on the other side and some just ascending the bank they took heart, and caused no more trouble.

I caught my horse, and mounted him and then caught Molly's pony that had strayed quite a little way off. We were soon all on board and pulling for the opposite shore.

Mrs. Hendrix was very anxious about Molly. She was very much frightened at the start, but when she saw her baby, as she sometimes called her, was safe, she soon got over her fright.

When the boat reached the other shore, she rushed on board and gathered Molly in her arms and carried her to the wagons that had not yet been taken to camp; for camp had not yet been established.

As soon as we landed we mounted our horses and rounded the cattle up and held them together until Mr. Hendrix had told us what to do with them.

He pulled out to one side and began to unhitch his horse; I could see what he was doing, and told the other boys I was going to help establish camp. They said, "Go on, we'll attend to the cattle."

I and the old gentleman soon had the tents pitched and everything in them that was needed. Then I mounted old Steady again and joined the boys with the herd.

It was now drawing toward night, and pretty soon Mr. Hendrix came out to where we were and told us to drive the cattle out about half a mile west and let them go; he didn't think they would stray very far away. We drove the cattle out and returned to camp.

That night two of the settlers came to our camp and inquired for Mr. Hendrix. "I am the man," he told them; "What can I do for you?"

"Those cows and bulls out here aways are yours, are they not, Mr. Hendrix?"

"Yes, they are mine."

"What will you take for them and sell us the whole herd?" they inquired.

"Why, I haven't thought seriously about selling. What will you give?"

"Well, now since you seem inclined to talk business we will go out and see some of our neighbors and give you an answer tomorrow." The men then walked away.

When the cattle buyers left, Mr. Hendrix went around among the men and wanted to know when they intended to make the final start. Not being organized, no one knew what the next man intended to do. Everything was at loose ends; but a meeting was agreed upon

and in half an hour all the men and some of the women were assembled at Cap Edwards' tent and talking over the prospects of the final start.

"Now, men," said Mr. Hendrix, "I have come to the conclusion not to drive my cattle across to California. They will be worth a great deal to me in that country, but I am afraid they will be a great hindrance to all of us. They are sure to get sore footed and can't possibly travel up with the horse teams.

Everyone agreed that was the "case" as they put it. Some were for going on; others wanted to lay by a few days. They argued the grass was getting better all the time and that there would be no time lost by laying over a few days longer. It was finally agreed that all those who had small teams might start in the morning and camp up at Grand Island and wait for the others. So on the following morning sixty wagons started, and the balance waited for Mr. Hendrix.

As we were going to lay by for one whole day, Henry, Jim and I, concluded to try our hand at hunting. We mentioned the subject to the old folks and they were very willing for us to go. In fact, fresh meat was a luxury none of

us had indulged in for some time. So the three of us saddled our horses and started up the river. We had been told by some of the boys of the neighborhood that deer could be found up the river about six miles. This was as good as we wanted, and we traveled along in great glee.

Three or four miles took us out of the settlement, and now, we began to look for signs. We rode slowly for a mile or two more before we saw any sign of game of any kind. The first sign we saw was turkey tracks, but we saw no turkeys.

We now concluded to separate. Henry took the left next to the bluffs; Jim the center and I the side next to the river. We had gone perhaps a quarter of a mile in this manner, when I heard a gun shot quite a distance to my left, and I was sure Henry had found something to shoot at. I had hardly made up my mind to this when I heard another shot much nearer. I rode along slowly for perhaps one hundred yards, when I heard a crash in the brush to my left. On looking in that direction I saw a pair of velvety antlers not fifty yards away. Turning my horse a little to the right so as to have a cross shot I took aim at what I thought to be

just below the head and pulled the trigger. Something tumbled and began to thrash the brush. I turned and rode in that direction as quickly as I could and there lay as fine a buck as one might wish. I got down and hitched old Steady and fell to work dressing my game.

Now, for the sake of the boys who may read this story, I will tell them how a deer is dressed when it is dressed right. It is almost impossible to hang a deer up if it is any size, before taking out the entrails, so you have to do all the work on the ground. A deer should be stuck exactly as you would a hog. Then cut off the head and shanks, then take out the entrails just as a hog is dressed and you are ready to hang it up. This is the way I did my buck but when it came to hanging it up that was a different matter altogether. I found I couldn't lift it at all.

Just then I heard someone coming through the brush, and looking up there stood Jim looking as though he had caught a large fish and let it get away. He said, in a doleful kind of way, "That is the very buck I've been after for the last fifteen minutes."

"I expect so," I said, "for it was scared when I shot it; it was looking for you." "Well,

let's hang it up and then go and find Henry, for I think he has one also."

It was a heavy job for the two of us, but we managed to hang it up after a fashion; then Jim tied his handkerchief above the deer, partly for a sign to find it by and to keep off the predatory birds. I led my horse to where Jim had tied his. Then we mounted and started on our hunt for Henry.

We had gone perhaps half a mile, when we heard another shot in our front, not more than three hundred yards away.

We struck the edge of the prairie in a few minutes and on looking along the opening between the bluffs and timber we saw Henry stooping over and walking slowly along as though he had lost something and was looking for it. We gave a yell and started toward him in a gallop. He straightened up and came towards us.

"Did you get anything?" I asked.

"Well not the last shot; I can't find any signs of a hair being touched and I guess I'll let him go; but I did kill a pretty good one back here a ways."

"Where is your horse?" I inquired.

"I hitched him back where the deer is lying."

"Why! Didn't you hang it up?"

"No, I couldn't," he said.

We turned and followed Henry back to where his deer was lying and there lay the largest buck I ever saw. It looked as large as a two-year-old calf.

After the greatest effort we managed to lift it on to Henry's horse; then we returned to my deer and put that on my horse, and then we were ready to start for camp.

"Jim!" said Henry, "How would it do for you to go on to camp and tell them of our luck? We'll have to walk, Albert and I, and you have nothing to carry." Jim was willing enough and started ahead.

Henry and I plodded along on foot leading our horses, for they were too heavily loaded to bear our additional weight.

Having started out early in the morning it was not yet past noon, but was approaching close to the noon hour. We were pretty hungry by this time, and as our horses were loaded, we would not think of stopping for lunch.

About two o'clock we reached camp; but before we reached camp, we met several of our

crowd going to try their hand at hunting, for Jim had told them of our success.

When we drew near our camp the girls came out to congratulate us on our good luck.

"Why, Henry," said Molly, "You and Albert are hunters from away back."

"Yes," said Henry, "We could kill a 'yellephant' if we had him tied down so he couldn't move."

"Why, were these deer tied down?"

"No, but we took advantage of them, and slipped up and shot them before they knew we were around."

"Well, that is the mark of a good hunter," she said.

"Well," Henry said, "We were in good luck and that's about all."



CHAPTER IV.

The Emigrants Reach Ft. Kearney and Employ
Jim Bridger and Young Will to Guide
Them to California—They Meet With
Indians, but the Crowd is Too Large
for Them to Attack—They Reach
California in Safety and Scatter
Out to Find Employment—The
Hendrix Party Go Up
Feather River.

Mr. Hendrix was pleased, and said he guessed we might keep the whole outfit in meat if we had nothing else to do.

Henry and I were both very fond of hunting and a proposition like that suited us to a "T."

Our kind employer had been out all day with the buyers of his cattle, looking at and appraising them, and had finally come to an agreement and the deal was made. So Henry, Jim and I had lost our jobs.

"Now, Mr. Hendrix," said Henry that evening, "We will have to pay our board, and we may as well start in right now."

"No, boys!" said the kind old man, "You need not do anything of the sort. I want you with use anyhow, and when we get to California, I can give you all the work you will want to do for some time, and your board for this trip can be counted out when we settle up for your work. How will that suit you?"

"First rate," we all said in a breath. So that matter was settled and nothing more was ever said about it for better than a year.

That night it was agreed to by all parties, we would make our final start the next morning. Our venison was skinned and salted down for use along the road, although the girls and their mother boiled a large kettle full that night, for cold lunches.

The next morning early we started, and arrived at Grand Island, but our friends of the forward train were not in evidence. We pushed on, and the fifth day out from the Missouri we found them at or near Fort Kearney.

When we drove up an animated scene presented itself to our view. We had been hearing shots fired from the time we were in hearing and when we came close enough to see what was going on a few men were on horseback firing at a target stuck up out on the prairie.

The men were running their horses as fast as they could go and when one got opposite the target he would fire, often missing altogether. But there was one young long-haired fellow that would hit the board every shot. We learned soon after he was a Government scout. Jim Bridger was there also, and had been hired by the emigrants to guide them across the plains to California or as far as the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and young Will Bridger called him to act as scout. He was training seven or eight of the emigrants to aid him in the scouting. This scouting was done to guard the train from sudden attacks by the Indians.

Bridger was in command of the train to see that it was brought quickly into proper shape for defense.

The next morning the entire outfit started. Our little train was in the rear, because of our numbers. The wagons were all numbered so that each teamster knew just what to do in case of attack. Each knew by the number of his wagon which way to turn. The odd numbers turned one way, and the even numbers the other way; and in this manner a corral could be formed quickly and the stock would be inside at once.

The way it was done is this: No. 1 takes the right side; No. 2 the left and every even number follows that one; then the odd numbers take to the right and follow the first wagon. If the ground is level, each leading wagon makes as weep around in a wide circle, then draws back toward the road, and meets the other wagons and as soon as the teams are taken out, cross tongues and tie them together with ropes, or chains. The two rear wagons never leave the road, but turn slightly to the right and left and crowd their wagon as near at the rear ends as possible. Thus is a pretty strong corral formed in a very few minutes with teams all inside, that Indians on their ponies can't break.

We had proceeded up the Platt several days, when one day the scouts brought in eight or nine scalps they had just taken from Indians they had killed not one mile from the train. Bridger had heard the firing, and taking five or six men with him after corralling the wagons, they rode quickly to the scene of action for he had seen the "Redskins," as he called them, before any shots were heard. The women and children were badly scared at first, but when the scouts returned and said there were only

ten, and they had killed all of them, their fright subsided. We then moved on some little distance and camped.

It appeared that our trouble was not over. One of the scouts did not get in until very late, and we could gather from their actions that Indians were still in the vicinity.

The next day, as we were moving along, word came that Indians were just ahead and Bridger had the wagons corralled in a short time. This time they came, and the women were scared worse than ever. Some of them screamed and cried, while others more cool, tried to keep them quiet. Nellie and Molly were scared, but kept quiet. Not the least sound was heard from any of the Hendrix family. I thought more of them than ever. This, of course, was while the Indians were coming, but before they began to circle our corral Jim and Henry and I had taken our places in the line that was formed around our outfit.

It was said those scalps that were taken the day before were tied on a wagon tongue at the front end of the train, but I never saw them, being at the rear all the time.

The Indians circled around our corral and then moved off to the top of the ridge a quarter

of a mile away, then stopped and seemed to consult over the proposition half an hour, then mounted their horses and rode off. Some of the scouts followed them for some time, but came back and reported the Indians had left entirely. This was good news to us.

It seemed this "Will" was a "crackerjack", for I think if it had not been for him the entire train—men, women and children—would have been massacred and burned, but Bridger was as good as he; the two together made a "team."

We continued our journey for some four or five miles farther, then camped.

A day or two after that we camped in a place where buffalo were plenty.

Will and four or five of the emigrants went out and drove several almost into camp, and killed three or four so close to camp that it was like going into one's own corral to kill beef.

I think after we reached the Bitter Creek country, a new route was selected, on account of Indians; this route took us, it was said, some seventy-five or a hundred miles north of Salt Lake City. At any rate we had no trouble, until some time after we passed Salt Lake Valley; then one evening five or six Redskins rushed in and tried to stampede our horses, but

Brider and the young fellow mounted their horses and got after them on the double quick. They killed two, but the other three made their escape. This was the last time we were troubled with Indians or anyone else.

Finally, after almost eleven weeks on the road, from the Missouri, we made our last camp east of the Nevada Mountains; and there our scouts proposed to turn back, but we would not hear of such a proposition. We, and especially the women, wanted them to continue the journey with us to California. They agreed. We told them it would cost them nothing; so that evening we had a grand dance. Our camp was a lovely one; the ground was smooth and level, and large pine trees stood here and there all over the camp, with no underbrush to obstruct the view.

I was in my element and dancing was my delight. Young Bill couldn't be induced to try; he was the most bashful young fellow I ever saw. I and Molly, and Henry and Nellie were in the third set; Henry was one of the fiddlers until then. Jim danced one set with Nellie and one with Molly, but Molly, for some reason or other, did not like him very well.

After the dance was over Captain Edwards

got up and made a speech. He praised our friends, the scouts, and gave them both a letter of recommendation that was signed by nearly everyone in the camp.

A few days later we were across the mountains. When we arrived within about twenty-five miles of Sacramento, a camp was established and here our guides left us. I think every man, woman and child in the camp shook hands with them.

Jim Bridger had taken quite a liking to me and wanted me to go with him, but I couldn't think of it, but when he came to shake hands with me, he said "Boy, you have the making of a man in you. I saw you at our sham' fight with the 'Injuns' back on the plains, and I could see you were not scared." He gripped my hand and said good-bye in a sad tone.

Uncle Billy Hendrix, as we called him now, went around among his own acquaintances that evening and told them to come to his tent; he wanted to see them on particular business.

Aunt Polly, as we called her, and the girls had gotten supper early, and we were just through eating when the men began to gather around our tent door.

Then we sat out chairs, boxes and anything

that would do for a seat; then Uncle Billy made a proposition.

"Boys, I have been thinking ever since I left Illinois that I would like to go prospecting. How would it suit you for us all to go in partnership and strike out up the country and try our hand at digging gold? You know the gold of this country has not all been found yet! Now suppose we give it a trial, and if, in six or twelve months we don't succeed, we'll try something else."

A Georgia miner by the name of Jacob Wamsley, spoke up and said, "Uncle Billy, it's always been my intention to prospect and I am 'shore' willin' to be one of your crowd."

They all agreed to try it and the matter was settled. There were six wagons in our little crowd and just twenty men counting Henry, Jim and myself, and five women, besides Molly and Nellie.

The next morning our little train started. We kept well up near the foot of the mountains on account of the numerous streams we had to cross. They were more rapid but not so deep as farther down.

In crossing one of the larger streams we came near losing a team, wagon and all.

Fish were always plenty in those streams. At noon and every night Henry, Jim and I and the girls would go fishing, and we hardly ever failed.

We traveled in this manner for eight days. In the afternoon of the eighth day we came to a small lake at the foot of a rather high peak. Here was an ideal place for a camp, so we immediately set to work, fixing up as comfortable a camp as one would wish. The ground was smooth and grassy; plenty of wood, and good water. What more could one want? Yes, there was one thing to desire, and that—GOLD—in sufficient quantities to pay. But that was to be seen later on.

That night, after all our work for the day was done, we had a jolly time. Henry played his violin; the women sang songs, and told stories. One of the women sang a song as follows:

My friends were the cause of a great separation,
By bearing a spite at my favorite one.
Besides a vexation, a great tribulation;
And they shall be sorry for what they have
done.

Chorus.

I'll eat, drink and be jolly,
For I don't care for Polly;
I'll drown her away in a full glass of wine,
I'll drown her away in a full flowing bumper,
And play on my fiddle to pass off the time.
The song was well sung, and I learned it
but forgot it years ago.

Uncle Billy proposed we should organize
and have certain kinds of work. We all agreed
to that. Jake Wamsley was to be the leader
in the mining operations, and have most of
the men on that committee. At least two men
must stay at the camp all the time. There was
no knowing what might happen. Henry and
I were chosen to do the hunting and Jim to do
the fishing, but before we went hunting or fish-
ing we must find a place to fence in our horses.

The next morning Jake took nine men with
him; armed themselves with picks, shovels and
gold pans and started up the lake shore to
where a little stream emptied into it, to pros-
pect for gold. Henry and I, and the girls,
mounted our horses and started out to find a
pasture for our stock. Jim went fishing and
was lucky, for we had fish that night for supper.

We climbed a low hill just west of camp

and on reaching the top we knew we had found our pasture. This ridge was narrow, and just beyond was a valley a half mile wide, and beyond that was another rocky ridge that could easily be brushed. The hill on our own side was steep and rough and very little work would fence that also. Now it only remained to see what could be done with the upper and lower ends of the valley.

CHAPTER V.

A Fine Camp Site is Found but Not Much Gold
—Henry and Albert do the Hunting and
Jim the Fishing—The Hunters Kill a
Large Bear and Get Covered with
Grease—They Make a
Rich Discovery.

Noticing that both the upper and lower ends of this valley was inclosed with trees and underbrush, it was evident a fence could be built at both ends in a short time. We found this to be true after visiting those places, and then returned to camp.

Nellie and Molly were in fine spirits and were constantly laughing and joking. Molly was a good rider for one so young, and so was Nellie, and when we reached the foot of the ridge, Molly bantered me for a race to camp, not quite a quarter of a mile distant. No sooner was the banter given than away we went at break-neck speed. I looked back when we reached camp and saw Nellie and Henry just scraping along and trying to knock one anoth-

er's hats off. No sooner had Molly seen this than she turned and galloped back, and I galloped after her as fast as my horse could go. We circled around them and told them they were to be escorted the rest of the way to camp for they were too young and foolish to be left alone. Then Nellie made a lunge at me, to knock my hat off, but I was too quick for her and, spurring my horse and giving her hat a quick flip with my hand, I sent it to the ground.

"Now, Bigety, get down and hand me my hat," she said in mock gravity, "or I'll never make you any more cookies."

"Oh, Nellie, don't go back on me like that. I'll get the hat if you will promise to make me some more cookies tonight."

"Don't you do it, Albert, unless she promises to make us all some," said Molly.

"Well, I'll make a whole mess, now get my hat."

All this time Henry was sitting on his horse laughing, and when I got down he gave my horse a cut with a switch he carried and sent him scurrying off to camp. I was very active in those days, and quickly making a grab at his side held on, and making one ump, I landed astride of his horse and away we all went to

camp yelling and screaming like a quartette of school children.

Thus we had our fun, for we were as happy a lot of children as it was possible to find anywhere.

We had all rushed off and forgotten the hat, and as soon as we reached camp I sprang down from behind Henry and mounting old Steady I rode back and picked it up.

"Now, Miss Smarty, the next time you try to knock my hat off, you had better tie your own on," I said as I handed it to her.

"Don't you think I won't," she replied.

While I was after the hat Henry had reported, and that afternoon Uncle Billy detailed eight men with axes to take all the horses and turn them out and brush in the pasture. Jim did not return at noon, but that evening he came in with all the fish he could carry. Deer were plentiful and it was no trouble to bag a couple any day. They were gettiug in good condition now as it was late in September.

The miners had been very unsuccessful. Their showing up to this time had been only about two ounces.

Two or three days later Uncle Billy and Aunt Polly both decided that part of the

wagons would have to be sent after our winter's supplies. This was something we had all overlooked, but it was not too late yet. Jake was the first one to volunteer to go.

"Now, boys," said Uncle Billy, "I want those to go that ain't good at mining and leave those that are the best at that business to stay; because mining is our principal business here."

"But, Uncle Billy," said Jake, "I want to go for special reasons. I want to try to send word to certain persons back in Missouri and I don't know where they live."

"Why, you can't find anyone going back this time of the year. It is too late."

"I know there will be no one going overland, but I may find someone going by water," said Jake.

"Yes," said Uncle Billy; "I hadn't thought of that."

Jake was one of the unmarried men, and three more were detailed to take two wagons and start the next morning.

When Jim got in with his fish a half dozen of us went to work to prepare them for supper.

Jim sat down and related his adventures.

One of the fish was very large and weighed at least three pounds.

"That one," he said, "gave me more trouble than all the others. When I got him hooked I knew he was a big one. I began to play him, for I was afraid to try to land him as I had the others and I just let him run himself down. But I had a time of it; he would lay quiet a few seconds, and as soon as I tried to pull him toward me, away he would go again, sometimes up the stream, sometimes down and every time when he went as far as I would let him he would jump two or three feet out of the water. Finally he got completely tired out. Then I had no trouble in landing him."

The following morning the teams started for Marysville, as that little town was nearer than Sacramento, and provisions could be purchased as cheap as at the latter place. It was considered necessary to keep an eye on our horses so one man was told off to guard them every day.

Henry and I kept the company supplied with fresh meat and Jim with fish.

On the following morning two of the four-horse teams were hitched up, and Jake, with

three of the men, started after our winter supplies.

A few days after the supply train left camp Henry and I started hunting pretty early. We had deer meat sufficient to do us several days, but we intended to hunt larger game than we had been hunting—in fact, we had noticed on some of our hunting trips several bear tracks, and it was our intention, if possible, to find one of these fellows.

We started in a somewhat different direction from any we had ever gone before. Our course, this time led us due north up a long ridge which led us out onto a flat, covered with large trees and clumps of manzanita. The big timber consisted of oak, digger pine, and sugar pine. Some of the latter were fully eight feet in diameter, and seventy or eighty feet to the first limb. Those trees were the largest we had yet seen. We had to stop and admire them.

This flat was perhaps two miles wide. As we were near the north side, and farther from camp, we began to go pretty slow, and kept our eyes peeled. Henry and I were walking some twenty yards apart. I noticed him going around a clump of thick brush. I kept on and

was passing it on the other side, when I heard Henry's rifle crack. Then he yelled out, "Lookout, Albert, it's a bear!"

I threw my gun up and waited. Then I heard more shots and just then I saw Mr. Bruin. I raised my rifle and fired at his shoulders. My bullet did not seem to affect him in the least, but it turned him in my direction. I saw I had no time to load and took my revolver as Henry had done and began on him with that. My shots had no power to stop him and he came right on. Henry saw that I was in great danger and ran at him with his rifle and clubbed and struck him over the small of the back. That checked him for a moment, and I took advantage of the moment to procure my rifle.

As he came at me on his hind feet he was thoroughly maddened; he was rumbling all sorts of noises in his throat. I made a quick lunge and struck him on the tip of the nose, and then a queer thing happened—the moment the blow was struck he doubled up, and stuck his head down between his knees, then rolled over and was dead. We couldn't imagine what had caused his death so sudden, but when we skinned him, it was plain to be seen

how it happened. I had struck with all my might and the gun, being a heavy one, the bones of his forehead were driven to his brain, and of course caused instant death.

We skinned him as quickly as possible, as the weather was rather warm, and there was danger of the meat spoiling before it could be taken care of.

After the hide was taken off the hardest job was getting the carcass separated. We had nothing but butcher knives and those were rather light, but we managed after awhile to get him cut in small enough pieces to hang up.

This was the hard job, as the bear was a large one and very fat. I think he would have weighed seven or eight hundred pounds by the quarter—that is, after he was quartered up. We managed after awhile to get the quarters hung up, but not very high.

We had noticed just north of us, about fifty yards away, a small creek. We went to this to quench our thirst and wash our hands. But going, we began to take notice of each other and both of us burst out in roars of laughter. The fact was, we were covered from our chins to our knees with grease. Our clothes were old and we didn't care. I went down to the

creek, at a point some little distance to the right of Henry, and thought first thing, before trying to wash, to drink out of the creek, and just then my attention was caught by something like little bits of brass. I sprang to my feet and yelled for Henry, "Come here, quick; I've found something."

He came as quickly as possible, for he thought sure I had found something, for I was excited. We both dropped to our knees and began gazing down into the water. Finally Henry drawled out, "Is that gold?"

"It can't be anything else," I said, as I began to pick up the nuggets, some as large as hazel nuts. "Sure, it's gold! Don't it look like that the boys have been washing out every day for a week or more?"

We gathered up all we could find, and tied it up in a handkerchief, and there was more than a pound. "Now, Henry, we have made a grand discovery and it will be a fortune for all of us." Henry was never as enthusiastic as I was, but he was overjoyed—that was plain to be seen.

"Now, Henry," I said, "let's stake it. We can cut something I think that will do for a

stake like we saw coming over the mountains last summer."

We found a dry stick about four inches through and began whittling on it, but we might just as well have tried to cut a gas-pipe.

"Now," said Henry, "what shall we write on it?"

"Why," I said, "I saw a claim stake as we were crossing the mountains and it read like this:

"We, the undersigned, claim by right of discovery and location, 1,500 feet along this vein or lode."

"But, see here; this ain't a vein or lode, this is a placer."

"Well, we can change the words 'vein' or 'lode' for 'placer' and write just the same."

"Well," said Henry, "you dictate and I'll write."

So the notice was duly written and stuck into the ground, but as we could not stick it deep enough we piled rocks about it, and after taking a look up and down the creek a little way and finding no more loose gold, we started for camp, and by this time it was getting late. It was nearly dark when we got to camp, and

when the girls saw us they came out a little way to see what we had, for they saw I was carrying something in a handkerchief, and they thought it was deer tallow. I handed the gold to Molly, and she let it drop, it was so unexpectedly heavy.

“Why, what is it, Albert? Is it lead?”

“No,” I said; “open it and see!”

Uncle Billy and Aunt Polly had come out now, for we were only a few feet from the tent, and wanted to know if we had killed anything.

“Yes,” said Henry, “but we have found something that’s better.”

We showed him the gold and he became excited at once, and wanted to know where we found it.

We told him about three miles north of here.

“Well, what size stream is it in?”

“It’s about the size of the creek that comes in at the head of the lake.”

“Can we get there handy with the wagons?”

“Yes; no trouble at all.”

We had walked around where the candle-light shone on us and Molly cried out, “Why, Albert—and Henry, too—what is the matter with your clothing? Why, you are grease from

head to foot! Look, Ma, how greasy they are."

Henry and I stood grinning and saying nothing.

"How did your clothes get so greasy?" Aunt Polly inquired.

"Why," said Henry, "we both fell into a lard spring."

"A lard spring!" said Molly, "just as if there was such a thing."

"I know," said Jake, "they have killed a bear, that's what they've done. Look here, at this hair on Henry's coat collar; that's from a bear."

Then we told them all about it, and what a fight we had. Henry had broken his gun stock, but my gun was not injured because I had accidentally given the bear a well-balanced blow, and the nose being softer and more giving than his back, the gun was not injured.

"Now," said Aunt Polly, "fix the boys something to eat; they are hungry, I know."

"We will have to change our clothes first, Aunt Polly," said Henry. So we went into our tent and began to change our greasy garments. While we were at this task the men all crowded around us, asking about our find.

We told them if the creek was as rich as

that particular point where we found those nuggets, for one thousand feet along its course, our fortune was assured. They all cheered lustily and were immensely well pleased.

Uncle wanted us to describe the locality.

We did so. We described it as follows:

"The creek runs in a westerly course for some distance from, say, four hundreds yards above where we struck it, and cuts its way through a small ridge just above our discovery and falls over a small precipice about six feet high; then, below that runs deeper; banks are higher for about two hundred yards; then turns northwest, and goes down a rapid. We don't know how far; we didn't explore it at all; we were in too big a hurry."

"Well," said Uncle Billy, "we must move up there right away."

"Yes, that is so; it is no use staying here any longer," was the decision of all.

While we were eating out supper, the girls were asking questions: they wanted to know all about our fight with the bear. We gave them a detailed account of how Henry saw him first by happening to go on the same side of a thicket the bear was, and gave him a shot with his rifle; then let him have it with his revolver.

By that time I was around enough to see what was going on and shot him with my rifle, then dropped that and began on him with my revolver, also. Then we told them how Henry had broken his rifle over his back and how I had accidentally given him a blow on the nose that settled his hash.

That night we had great times, for we were happy. Henry got out his fiddle and played several old-time tunes; the girls sang songs; and Aunt Polly sang one about a young girl dressing herself in man's attire and following her sweetheart to the Mexican war.

“And as to what her name was the Captain wished to know.

She answered him in sweetest tones, “They call me Jack Munroe.”

That is the only verse I can remember. But one thing I shall never forget—she sang it in the sweetest and most caressing voice I ever heard. She sang it as though she was singing to a baby, to put it to sleep.

The next morning the horses were brought over and hitched to the four remaining wagons, and we began to load up. Six men, counting Henry and I, went to work on the road. By the time we had cleared the way as far as

the big flat, the wagons were there, and the balance of the way was comparatively easy.

When we reached the bear hide they all took a look at it and as soon as the wagons were unloaded I took a handful of salt and sprinkled it on to salt it down.

When Uncle Billy saw our little creek he was the best pleased man I ever saw.

"Why," he said, "this is the best camping place I ever saw. Now, show me where you found the gold on the bed rock."

"This way, Uncle Billy!" I called and led the way down to the creek, and pointed out the very spot we had searched. The water was very clear, and searching everywhere around, Uncle Billy found a larger nugget than Henry or I had found the day before.

"Now," said Uncle Billy, "I am going to keep this one as a souvenir, because it is the first I have ever found."

Everyone gladly agreed to this when he told them. The nugget was about the size of a hickory nut, and was nearly round.

Two of the wagons were sent after the camp outfit, and while they were gone those who were left set up the tents.

We picked out the site we wanted to build

our cabins, and set the tents off to one side.

Henry and I and Jim fetched our bear meat and hung it up higher than we had it the night before, and in a better place. The hide I hung across a limb near at hand, for I wanted to dress it some day if I could, though I knew nothing about such work.

When the two wagons got in, the other tents were stretched and camp was completed. Jim had taken his fishing outfit and gone down the creek to the foot of the rapids and caught quite a string of trout.



CHAPTER 6.

**A Fight With Indians—Henry and Albert Go
for Help—Jake Wamsley Dies of Wound—
the Hendrix Family Leave the Mines
to Take Up Land.**

Next day we set in to cutting timbers for our houses. We cut one set for a kitchen and dining room. The others were not so large. We cut enough to build our seven rooms, counting the dining room. Timber was plenty; and we were all provided with an ax, and working near camp every man was employed. It did not take us long to cut timber enough to construct all the buildings we wanted.

On the eighth day after settling in our new camp we had seven buildings finished; our dining and cookhouse was a model of a building. We scored and hewed the logs as we put them up; it was sixteen feet in width and looked fine, only a floor was lacking. But that we could not help as we had no way of making lumber. No sawmill was in that country at that period of California's history.

It was time now to keep a man at the old camp to guide the boys to the new camp, and it devolved upon one of the married men to take the first trick.

One man had been kept at the pasture all the time, but the last, like the one just proposed was easy, and not at all irksome.

There was a number of good books in the camp, among which were Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," and Robinson Crusoe," books that were popular at that time and very entertaining. The guard could take one of these books and find a vantage place on the ridge and read and watch by turns. The whole of the pasture could be seen at the same time, and if any disturbance took place among the horses, he would know it. The guard always carried a rifle.

It was not known just at that time when the teams would return from below, so on the tenth day of their absence the first man was sent down to watch.

The fall rains had not yet set in; the streams were all low and it was not likely there would be any trouble on the road, and the boys ought to be back in twelve days. In the meantime, the men went in to mining in earnest, and every

night the showing was ample proof that we had struck a very rich placer stream.

On the twelfth day that our provision train was gone it fell to my lot to go to the old camp. Nellie and Molly wanted to go, but their mother wanted them to help her wash, as there had been no washing done for sometime. The girls being the best girls in seven states, said no more and I shouldered my rifle and started, after pocketing a lunch for my dinner. I also took a fishing rod along and a book.

I had read and fished several times alternately until about the middle of the afternoon, and while I was fishing I heard the wagons coming.

Just out of sight down the road, there was a very rocky place, and it was when crossing this rocky place I heard them. I quit fishing and skipped out across the little valley where our old camp had been, and got behind a tree to see what the boys would do when they came and found the camp deserted.

I was just in time; for in less than a minute I saw the foremost team coming around a bend in the road.

I was so full of glee I could hardly keep from yelling, then.

I shall never forget the look on Jake's face when he drove up and stopped and gazed around, in a kind of bewildered daze.

One of the boys in the rear hollered out, "What's wrong?"

"I'll be blamed if I know," said Jake, "they must all have taken the measles and broke out and got away."

Then I stepped out from behind the tree and laughed long and loud for their looks were enough to tickle a horse to death.

"What's up kid," said Jake, "where are all the folks at?"

"Oh, we've moved camp!" I exclaimed.
"That's all."

"Well, where to?"

"About three miles north, there's the road," I told them. "Going up that point. Come on, I'll soon show you where the camp is."

I started up the ridge and the wagons followed. Jake was talking to me all the time as he drove along, and wanted to know what made us move. I told him he would know when we got to camp.

When he found I wouldn't give any satisfaction he stopped asking questions. I didn't

want to tell him what we had discovered: I wanted him to see for himself.

We reached camp in about an hour. I fell back a little to watch the boys when they come in sight of the houses. Jake yelled out as soon as he saw the cabins, and wanted to know if we had been working both day and night.

I told him no, only about ten hours out of the twenty-four. It was growing late and the men had all knocked off work, and when they found the boys had come they all came out laughing and talking, and wanted to know "how is this for high?"

"Uncle Billy," said Jake, "what made you run off and leave us?"

"The lure of gold Jake; let the boys tend the teams and come in here. I want to show you something!"

They all climbed down from the wagons and walking in as though they thought a practical joke was about to be played on them.

Uncle Billy went over to a chest in the far corner of the house and lifted the lid and invited the boys to come and see something that was good for sore eyes.

When they got a peep at what was inside of the chest they gave a yell that would have

done credit to an Apache Indian. And no wonder; for lying in the bottom was a pile of gold, as though a two gallon measure had been emptied into it. Some of the others came and said, "How do you like that?" "Ain't that alright, Jake," and the three other boys had been cutting capers all over the floor.

Molly and Nellie were laughing at them.

Uncle Billy and Aunt Polly were smiling in a happy, contented way and all were talking, laughing and cheering in a breath; one would have thought pandemonium had broken loose.

The next thing was the mail.

"Have you brought us any letters, boys?" asked Uncle Billy.

"You bet," they said. One of them went to one of the wagons and shouldered a sack as large as a meal sack and came lugging it in and emptied it on the table. There was at least twenty-five pounds and consisted of letters and papers and packages of all sorts and sizes. Almost every man and woman got a letter from their friends and relatives back in the states; in fact all but Jake.

It had been noticed that at times by all, that Jake was under a cloud. He had spells of

depression that made him almost morose. But Jake was a good fellow at all times, even when under one of his fits of depression.

I received letters from home. One from mother, and one from each of my sisters. My mother stated that everything was going on as usual. Uncle Andy Tommyhill had been sick but was oetting all right now. My oldest sister had been ailing some, and her husband, Billy Goodman, was improving his land by clearing off a new patch of timber. This timber was mostly maple where I had hunted squirrels many times. That made me feel sorry, for that piece of timber was my favorite hunting ground.

Aunt Polly received a letter from mother, but I never knew all it contained, for I don't thiuk Aunt Polly wanted me to hear the eulogy my mother sometimes bestowed upon her boy.

That night we cleared off a place outside and had a dance; the first one since landing in California.

Our dance came off just in time, for that night it began to rain. It was a little early for that region of country, but we didn't care, for our horses needed fresh food that these rains would bring pretty soon. I have known every-

thing to get green in ten days after the rain set in.

It was now about the middle of October.

All of the men were satisfied with our situation. We had taken out more than fifty pounds of the precious metal; our health was good, and what more could we ask. We had a doctor in our company, but we scarcely remembered it, for his services had never been required. Our young doctor, Howard Philips, had never graduated at his school, because he had quit six months too soon, just to go with the big train, that was collecting at Council Bluffs at that time.

Henry, Jim and I alternated between hunting, fishing and panning gold during the winter, and occasionally guarding the horses and getting wood.

The winter passed pleasantly and spring came on in a mild way, as springs usually do in California.

Our horde of gold gradually grew in size; and by the time the rains ceased and the waters ran low, we had about one hundred and eighty thousand dollars cleaned up.

This was a remarkably good showing for

twenty men, but it has been excelled by many placers in California.

Fish were plenty, but deer were getting scarce.

Henry and I now had to take our horses when we went hunting, and often had to go six or eight miles from camp.

Aunt Polly often admonished us not to get lost.

“No,” I said, “Aunt Polly, we know all the creeks and hills in five or six miles of here, and when we strike one we always know where we are.”

We had never been able to locate another bear, since the one we killed last fall, but we had seen a number of tracks, not very fresh.

Time wore smoothly along until the middle of August, when Henry and I, as usual, saddled our horses and started out to try and find fresh meat for the company. This time we took a northerly course, that is, we crossed the creek and climbed to the top of the little hill that lay just east of the camp, and kept along that ridge as far as it led in the direction we wanted to go. Then we crossed a big flat that was almost void of timber and everything else except

rocks, until we were farther from camp than ever before.

Henry thought we had better not go any farther in that direction, and I thought the same, but being close to the north edge of the flat, we concluded to ride to the edge and see what would show up beyond. The north edge of the flat was fringed with scrub oak and manzanita, but we could easily see beyond, a board valley, and at the farther side of the valley was an open ridge; that is, there was no timber on the side next to us.

We had not looked very long when we saw something that made our eyes pop out farther than they did when we were surrounded by Indians on the Plains the year before. We both exclaimed at the same time, "Indians!" and Indians it was, about fifty coming strolling down the ridge about a mile away. We watched them a few minutes, until we were convinced they were coming our way, and perhaps, directly to our camp, then we made tracks for camp as fast as our horses could carry us.

"Henry," I said, as we were going at a swift lope across the stony prairie, "this won't do, we'll tire our horses out before we go half way, and it may be Uncle Billy will want one

or both of us to go down the river to one of the camps and get help. There is no telling how long the red devils may hang on, once they get started."

We had slowed our horses down when I first spoke, for the ground was very rough. It did not take us more than one hour to reach camp and give the alarm.

We came in on the little ridge east of the camp and yelled out at the top of our voices, "Indians!" Everyone knew in a moment that something was wrong by our actions and the hideous yells we gave, and every man dropped his tools and rushed for the houses.

It was decided to use the cook room for our fort as that building was the largest and best situated; and again, it had all the provisions and ammunition for our rifles and revolvers.

It seems the Indians had found our trail and followed it to camp, for in half an hour after Henry and I reached camp they opened fire at some clothes that were hanging in the bushes near the house. This gave us an opportunity to send in a withering fire that somewhat cooled their ardor.

We had hitched our horses back of the far-

ther cabin, and were out of sight of the redskins.

"Where are your horses?" asked Uncle Billy, just after the first volley had been fired.

"Back of our cabin."

"Say, can you boys reach them without being seen by the Indians?"

"I think so," said Henry, "we can climb out at the back window and reach them, and if we can get a little start unobserved, we are all right for the reds are all afoot."

"Then do so," he said, "and go down to the first camp and tell them our situation, and get a few men to come and help us."

We were outside before he was through talking and found, by the way the cabins were situated, that we would have no trouble in reaching our horses, and then the brush at that point was so thick we slipped away unobserved. After slipping some two hundred feet through the tangled underbrush we came to more open ground; there we mounted and rode at top speed for half an hour; we could hear guns cracking all the time, until out of hearing.

We kept up a pretty smart gait all the time, but not enough to worry our horses.

A couple of miles below our old camp was

an opening several miles along the creek, just as we reached it we saw a sight that made our hearts glad; for coming up the road not a half a mile off was an outfit of miners on horseback and just behind them was a string of wagons with men, women and children, all walking or riding along in perfect contentment. No sooner did we see them than we put spurs to our horses and ran to meet them as soon as possible.

The horsemen were some two hundred yards ahead of the wagons; some forty of them, all carrying rifles and pistols. As we came up close enough to make them understand, we began gesticulating in a way that made them think something was surely wrong. So they, too, started up in a canter, and as soon as we met, I called out, "Why Captain Edwards, is that you?"

"Yes, who is this? Why it's Albert and Henry! Where are the others?"

"Captain, we are besieged by a large number of Indians, and we want help quick."

"Men," shouted the old captain, "all of you that have families stay with the wagons; all the others follow me, and come quick."

We then all started in a fast gallop, and were soon out of sight of the others. Henry and I

rode along side of the Captain and gave him in detail all the information we had to impart. We told him of the ridge east of camp, and how easy it would be to dismount and slip onto the Indians, if they were not all around the camp, and by skirting along the foot of the ridge on the east side we could surprise them. The Captain agreed to this and the plan was carried out to the letter.

When we arrived in hearing of the camp, we could still hear shots at short intervals, and we knew by that it was all right at home, or at least, our friends were still able to put up a fight.

As soon as the end of the ridge was reached, we dismounted and rushed for the other side, and Captain Edwards ordered us to halt.

“Now, boys,” said he, “I want you to form a line east and west and move carefully along and don’t go too fast, but keep in line so you will reach the edge of this brush at the same time, and don’t shoot until I give the command.”

Then the line was formed, and we moved forward in as good form as was possible in this thick brush.

When we reached the edge of the thicket, we

were in plain view of the red devils. They were at the top of the ridge, and were banging away as fast as they could with the limited number of rifles in their possession. They had built up a small breastwork out of loose rocks that were easily to be had at that place, and were careful not to expose their ugly faces more than they could help. They were not at all prepared for the surprise we were about to give them. Captain Edwards gave the word fire; every man fired.

“Charge with your revolvers.”

We grasped our rifles in our left hands and drew our revolvers and started yelling as hideous as it was possible, firing as we ran, and in one minute not an Indian that could run was in sight. Some of them were so scared that they ran over on the wrong side of the ridge and were shot down by those in the cook-house.

We all now rushed to the top of the ridge and gave a tremendous cheer. It was answered from the camp, the door of the cook-house flew open and the garrison came crowding out as fast as they could.

In order to cross the creek dry-shod we had to go back to the east side of the ridge and

cross where it was shallow and rocky. We had dug a trail down through the gap on the south side of the creek. We were soon stringing along that trail. Henry and I in the lead, of course, Captain Edwards came next, and his men stringing along after him. Nellie and Molly came out with a rush to Henry and I, overjoyed to see us safe.

Aunt Polly and Uncle Billy came out and shook our hands as though they had not seen us for a year.

“Uncle Billy,” I said, “allow me to introduce you to Captain Edwards.”

This created a diversion, for by this time the men were shaking hands all around.

“Well, Captain,” said Uncle Billy, “how does it happen you are around just at the right time?”

“Well, you see, Uncle Billy, we tried at Placerville, and in that neighborhood all fall and then moved farther into the hills, but didn’t do much good even there. So this spring we moved up on East Feather and tried it there, until about a week ago we started up this way. We struck your trail you made last fall, or we supposed it was yours, and were following it along when we met your boys.”

"Well, you made a lucky move for us, I am thinking."

Some of the men had brought up the horses and unsaddled them and turned them loose above the ridge.

We were now sitting around outside on the ground, most of us.

Uncle Billy had proposed to our little company to give our friends a share of the ground.

"Captain," said Uncle Billy, "this is a very rich stream. Why last fall we had to dig a well on account of the muddy condition of the water in the creek after we began to wash gold, and in digging the well, which is only ten feet deep, we took out over a thousand dollars, and the well is only four feet wide. Why, we are sitting at this moment over ground that will yield at least five dollars to the pan."

"This is remarkable," exclaimed the Captain, "remarkable."

"And that isn't all," said Uncle Billy, "all the way up and down as far as anyone has tried it, it pans rich. Now, you men, when your wagons get here, cut down those banks and pitch your tents over there on the other side, and make yourselves at home; you might take picks and shovels and have it done by the time

your wagons arrive and take them right over.

Our women folks had been cooking dinner for all, and it was now ready.

It was impossible for all to sit down to our big hewed log table at once, but by the time all of us were done eating, the teams had pulled in, then another hand-shaking took place, for we were acquainted with all of them.

As no one had been badly hurt in the fight, as we thought, our doctor was not called on to do very much in the way of bandages and splints. One of the boys had been slightly scratched on the shoulder by a bullet coming through a chink between the logs, and another had received a slight wound in the neck; that was Jake Wamsley. Jake was always a queer person, and refused to have it attended to. He had tied his handkerchief around it, and let it go at that.

The bullet that made the wound in Jake's neck was a very small one, it had gone under the skin just back of the vein that runs along back of the ear and so close it was a miracle the vein was not severed. The wound bled but little and gave no one any uneasiness.

It was getting too late now to bury the dead

Indians, so it was put off until the following day.

All the arms and ammunition were brought in and among the few rifles and old muskets the reds had was a small bored, well-built rifle that was thought to be the one that sent the bullet through Jake's neck.

There were no breach loaders at that time. The Spencer Maynard, and Henry repeaters might have been out by 1855, but none of them had reached California, as yet.

The little rifle had taken my eye to such an extent I told them I would like to have it as my share of the spoils. Everyone agreed to that, so I took charge of it with a great deal of pleasure.

"How will you get any bullets for it?" asked Henry.

"Why, I think number two buck-shot will just fit it."

"Here, kid," said one of the men that helped carry in the arms, "here is a little pocket of bullets I found on one of the dead Indians. Maybe these will fit."

I took the bag and found about fifty that were just the right size.

"Well, that's the Indian," I said, "that fired

the shot that wounded Jake, I'll warrant."

That night Jake's neck had become considerably swollen. The doctor did all he could, but all he could do didn't do any good. We sat up late that night, and Henry and I sat up all night. Jake continued to grow worse and by morning he said he would have to go, nothing could save him.

He called for Uncle Billy and Aunt Polly. The old couple were awakened and told that Jake was dying. They immediately got up and went in to the room where he was lying.

He was in a kind of stupor. The doctor gave him a stimulant, and he revived, and seeing Uncle Billy and Aunt Polly standing by his bed, began to talk in a feeble voice about a sister he had in Missouri.

"Give my part of the gold to her, if you can find her," he said. "She is poor; her husband is no good. We quarreled, she and I, because I knew him better than she did, and I have never been to see her since. She may think I'm dead, because I have not written to her for several years."

Uncle Billy promised she should have the money if it was possible to find her.

Aunt Polly was holding his head. A few

minutes after this promise had been made, Aunt Polly laid his hand over his breast and stepped back with a sob, for Jake Wamsley had ceased to live. He was dead. Our Jake, one of the best men in the crowd, if not the best, had passed away; had gone from our midst and we missed him.

All the camp was there, and everyone wanted to do something; and when Uncle Billy mentioned the grave that would have to be dug, a dozen men at once grabbed their tools and started to hunt a suitable place to dig it.

Captain Edwards suggested the top of the little ridge east of the camp, and everyone agreed that it was the most suitable of any place in that immediate locality.

We had no lumber to make a coffin, but there were several sideboards on the wagons that would answer, so every man that had sideboards brought them in and two men set to work to construct as decent a coffin as circumstances would permit.

That afternoon we carried him to the top of the little hill and set the coffin down by the side of the grave; then all took off their hats while Captain Edwards read the burial service:

“Earth to Earth,
And dust to dust.”

then we lowered the coffin into the grave and began to throw the dirt back and filled it up.

After this was over, some one proposed that as Jake had been killed in battle, it might be appropriate to fire a salute over his grave. This seemed to be the opinion of all, so Henry, Jim and I, and three others were detailed to go and bring our rifles. When this was done, the Captain had us form in line by the grave and at the word of command we fired one volley; but as our guns were only muzzle-loaders, and would take so long to load, we let it go at that. So after throwing a few green boughs on the grave, we returned to camp.

We worked on at our gold washing until sometime in September. Then, one evening Uncle Billy called us all together and informed one and all that as he had come to California for the purpose of obtaining land, he proposed to go down on one of the numerous streams below and proceed to put his first intentions into operation. “For,” said he, “if I don’t get land pretty soon, there will be no choice locations left.”

“That’s so, Uncle Billy, but don’t you think

it would pay better to stay here and take out the value of a good piece of land after it is improved, rather than go down there now and improve one?"

"Yes, but I want my choicer and have the pleasure of improving it myself, if I can find a place to suit me, and I think I can, for in coming up here last summer I noticed several places that I think I would like."

Then the men began to discuss the best method of dividing the gold in our possession.

First it was decided to give a percentage to the women, then divide the balance equally after five per cent had been taken out. It had to be done by weight. The balance was divided between twenty persons, and it was found that each man had ninety-three pounds. Now, if the gold proved to be worth at least twenty dollars an ounce, we had over twenty-nine thousand dollars each.

"Well, Henry," said Uncle Billy, "Albert, Jim and you are going with us, ain't you?"

"You just bet we are," I said, "and more than that Uncle Billy, we are going to stay with you until you get good and tired of us."

"I guess we won't get tired of you boys,

if you do as well in the future as you have done in the past."

"Now, there are two items you overlooked Uncle Billy, and that is our board bill coming out, and that little wad of gold Henry and I picked up the day we made the discovery."

"So far as the board bill is concerned, boys, that is all right. You can help me on the ranch, and as to the gold, so far as I am concerned, I am willing to give my part of that to you boys, who found it."

The others all declared they were willing to let it go that way.

Early the next morning, Uncle Billy rousted us up to go after the horses. We were ready in a few minutes, and I noticed the girls were ready, too. We didn't take our saddles; they told us they could ride bareback as well as we could, but we told them we could just as well carry their saddles.

We all started off in a run, squealing and laughing, as might a lot of school children.

We were in the best of health and a run of a mile or more, we did not mind, no more than a rabbit.

It was fully two miles to the pasture, and I don't think we were more than fifteen minutes

getting there. The horses were soon caught and the girls' ponies saddled. Then we boys mounted our horses leading the others.

We were soon off for camp.

"Let's go by the old camp," said Nellie, "and take the road, it will be so much better traveling that way."

We all agreed and went to that side where our old trail led up the hill and laid down the one bar, passed out and began the struggle up the steep hill, that lay just east of the pasture.

I led two horses, Jim two and Henry two, while the other two followed, making the eight work horses of Uncle Billy's for the two wagons.

We were not more than half an hour going from the old camp to the new, for the girls were determined to lead us a wild chase if they bursted a cinch.

When we reached camp, breakfast was ready; we all ate quickly and began harnessing up and loading the wagons.

Those who intended to stay helped us load, and it did not take long to get ready to start.

After everything was in the wagons and the horses all hitched we went to Jake's grave and

decorated it with a few green boughs, for we thought a sight of our friend from Georgia. Then bidding our friends good-bye, we pulled out.

The girls rode their ponies, Henry and I our horses and Jim concluded that he would ride in one of the wagons and drive.

I had succeeded in tanning the bear skin in a kind of way. It was not very soft, but it made a most excellent seat, so I gave it to Aunt Polly. After she got into the wagon, she cried out, "Why, Albert, this is the best seat I ever had. It's just fine."

"All right, Aunt Polly," I said, "you can keep it for that."

"Thank you, Albert, I am ever so much obliged."

The bear skin deal had been settled between Henry and I and the skin had fallen to me.

That evening we camped in a fine place; the grass was good—dry as it was—but it was of a better kind than the grass that our horses had been used to.

The grasses of California vary in kinds, some are so stiff in summer nothing will eat it, but in winter, when green, it is good feed.

We reached this camp in time for Jim to

catch us a good mess of nice trout, and I took my little rifle and killed a half dozen quail. They were numerous, here.

"Boys," said Uncle Billy, the next morning, as we were waiting for breakfast, "what do you think of this country for a home?"

"It's all right," replied Henry, "but don't you believe there's a better location down farther? You know we leave this creek down here a few miles, strike across to another that comes from the east. If I remember right, there is a valley that covers a large tract of fine looking land; if you remember, also, there are two little streams that flow parallel for some distance almost due west, and the strip of valley between is at least a mile wide, and as level as a house floor."

"Yes, I think I do. Didn't we camp at that place coming up last summer?"

"We sure did," I said, "for I remembered it as soon as Henry described it."

"Then, let's go down there this morning," said Aunt Polly. "We can't get there too quick."

So as soon as breakfast was over we saddled and harnessed up and started for the land which we occupied for many years.

We only had to go ten miles that morning to reach the two little streams before mentioned.

We were delighted with the location; it looked better than we had expected to find it.

Our tents were pitched in a position not to interfere with our sites for cabins we intended to erect right away.

That night we talked over the disposition of our gold. It was considered unsafe to keep it in camp; we were liable to be robbed at any time now, although up in the mines, a miner's money was comparatively safe.

There had been summary punishment meted out to any one who was caught stealing from a miner. But down here it was not safe, for our nearest neighbor was miles away.

On the following morning Uncle Billy told Henry, Jim and I to harness two of the horses and take one of the wagons and go down to Marysville and deposit our money in the bank at that place.

We immediately set to work to carry out the order.

Uncle Billy put the big oak chest in the wagon, then carried out the sacks of gold and placed them in the chest; it was not the safest place

for it, but that was the best that could be done. It would have taken a hammer or an ax to open the chest, and that was too heavy for four men to lift, after the gold was placed in it.

Before we started, or in fact the night before, Aunt Polly had written some letters, and when she mentioned them that morning Jim, Henry and I sat down and penned a few lines to our people. I told my mother that I did not expect to come home for sometime yet, that I intended to make a home for her and the girls if they would come. I told her California was good enough for me, and I thought she would like it and I intended to go back to Missouri and fetch her out here sometime in the near future.



CHAPTER VII.

The Three Boys Go to Marysville to Deposit Their Gold—A Holdup—Seven of the Robbers Are Killed.

By eight o'clock we were ready to start. Henry climbed upon the seat to drive. Jim sat with him and I took a seat on the chest. We were well armed, each having a rifle and revolver. We kept a sharp lookout for any one approaching us from any direction.

We met no one on the road that day, nor did we on the entire trip, until we arrived at a ranch about ten miles above Marysville. Night had overtaken us at this point, and here we made our first night's camp.

This man, his wife and two children comprised the family. He settled here the year before and was one of the families that had crossed the plains with us, and as soon as he found out who we were, he insisted on our staying with him and not camping out.

We told him we would eat with him; but we had bedding—plenty of it—and would camp in or by our wagon.

This was agreeable, so we took our horses to his barn and put them up and fed them.

We were very figity, but we tried not to show it. The immense amount of gold in our possession kept us uneasy all the time.

After supper, we talked over old times as we called them, though it was but little better than a year since we first arrived in California.

But we enoyed it as much as if it had been ten years.

One of us would get up and go out where the wagon was every once in a while.

I don't know if the rancher noticed it or not. Our wealth kept us continually in hot water.

When we had a little less than one hundred and fifty thousand dollars to keep us so uneasy, what does Rockefeller experience every day of his life, with millions to think of? The next day we arrived safely at our journey's end; thankful that we were not molested enroute.

We deposited our gold and received certificates for gold bullion, not money.

We did this so that in case we wished to draw out the gold, we could do so.

Having reached town early, we transacted our business by three o'clock and started back on our journey for home. It was dark when

we arrived at the ranch where we stayed the night before.

We didn't forget the children and brought them all the candy they could eat.

We heard groaning in a back room, and asked who was sick.

We were informed that about two hours by sun, two men on horseback came in, who were pretty badly shot up. "They won't tell anything about themselves, nor who they are," the ranchman informed us, "and I shall go after a doctor, for I don't want them to die on my hands without a certificate from a doctor."

We did not stay at the house, but camped just below on the river.

A few minutes after we had made camp the ranchman passed in a buggy, going after the doctor, and about twelve that night he returned, bringing with him not only the doctor, but two other men.

At daybreak we were up and going. We wanted to get home that day, and it required all day to do it.

When we drove up to inquire about those men that were wounded, we were informed that both had died; one about midnight, just before

the doctor arrived, and the other only a few minutes ago.

"And did they give their names?" we inquired.

"No, they would never tell anything about themselves."

As we drove along we speculated as to who they could be, but speculation gave us no clew as to their identity, so we dropped the subject and soon forgot it.

The sun was going down when we came in sight of home; we called it home now, for it was our home then, and for many years after, except a period of five years, which I shall relate by and by in a story apart from this. As soon as the girls saw us coming, they mounted their ponies bare-back, and came to meet us. They were full of information they wanted to be the first to impart.

"Oh, boys, you don't know what has happened! We've been held up by a band of robbers." The girls were so excited they could hardly tell what they wanted to. They jumped off their ponies and Jim and I tied them to the back end of the wagon, while the girls climbed up to the seat, and then they told us how nine men came to camp yesterday and tried to make

their pa give up all of his money, but just then a party of horsemen, that were coming down the road from the north, charged them, and killed five, and wounded two, and two got away but they think they were both badly hurt.

When the girls told us about the two wounded men, Henry and I gave each other significant looks.

"What do you think of that, Henry?" I said as soon as the girls had given us this information. They saw we knew something about the case ourselves, and wanted to know if we had seen those that had got away. Then we told them of the two that had died that morning ten miles this side of town.

The old couple were standing on the bank of the creek, waiting for us. As soon as we crossed the creek, Henry called out and asked Uncle Billy how being robbed felt.

"The girls, I see, told you about the attempted robbery," said Uncle Billy.

"Yes, and if we had been here some of us would have been hurt as well as the robber, I'm afraid," said Henry.

We were unhitching the team while they were relating the details of the robbery.

About the middle of the afternoon of the

second day of our departure, while Uncle Billy was digging the foundation of a house and while Aunt Polly and the girls were up the creek a half mile or so, nine hard-looking men rode up to Uncle Billy and demanded "that gold you've got here."

Uncle Billy was taken completely by surprise. He said he thought by their actions they intended to shoot him on the spot.

"Come, show where it is, and be quick; we've no time to loose!" This brought the old gentleman back to his senses.

"Men," he said, "I have no gold here. You are wrongly informed. I have no money here of any kind."

And he was telling the truth, for we had taken all we possessed to town to have it locked up in a safe place, to prevent just such fellows from getting it.

"This won't do old man. You have that gold hid somewhere, and you have to tell where it is."

Two of them jumped down from their horses and leveled their pistols at him, said, "Now find that money old man, or you die right here."

Just then a party of some twenty miners

on horse-back came around the point of timber a hundred yards up the road, and taking in the situation at a glance, drew their pistols, and with a wild yell came thundering down on the unsuspecting outlaws, firing as fast as they could cock their revolvers and take aim.

The battle was over almost as soon as it begun, and five of the marauders lay stretched on the ground, two being still on their horses, as in fact nearly all were, got away, and two were lying prone upon their saddles, who were so badly wounded they could neither get down nor guide their horses and were easily captured.

All of this had taken but a minute of time, and when the excitement was over, it was discovered that the twenty men, who had come so opportunely, were none other than our old friends of the mining camp of Edwardsville, as they had named our old camp. Twelve of the men were of our old company, and the others were from Captain Edward's company. They had had trouble with robbers themselves and had sent five wagons to Marysville to deposit their gold and obtain supplies, and their wagons were just back a little ways.

"Why didn't we meet them," we wanted to know.

"Why," said Uncle Billy, "they took another road that is a little nearer, and the river being at a very low stage, they concluded to go that way."

The women folks had strayed so far up the creek, fishing, they had not heard the shooting and come in sight as the men mounted their horses and were riding off.

They were pretty badly scared when they learned what had happened, but went right to work making bandages for the wounded bandits.

One was an old man, perhaps sixty, and the other not more than thirty. Neither one would talk of themselves, but inquired of me and Henry and Jim if we had seen anything of the two that had made their escape.

We had told the folks about those two wounded men, and Uncle Billy cautioned us to say nothing to them about the two that were dead, so we told the robbers we knew nothing about their comrades.

That night, Uncle Billy thought it would be a good thing to go up to our old camp and fetch the doctor, as it might be those men would need medical attention, and that pretty soon, as one of them was shot through the

shoulder in such a manner it was possible the wound would prove fatal.

"Uncle Billy," I said, "I am willing to go; my horse is fresh. He has done nothing since we came down here, and I can make it in one day, if I can get an early start."

"All right, Albert, if you want to go and tell the doctor all about it, so he'll know what to bring. He has a lot of tools for his trade, and I think he can extract the bullet that is in the shoulder of one of them."

This was taking up precious time, for we wanted to get our houses built before the rainy season set in, and that time of year was beginning to draw near.

On the following morning, bright and early, I was on my way to the old camp. They called it Edwardsville now in honor of the old Captain.

I had been riding pretty hard for more than twenty miles and had sobered down to a quiet walk, when on looking up suddenly, I saw three rough looking men some two hundred yards up a by-road.

I knew in an instant they were a band of robbers, and I had better be getting out of there as fast as possible. They saw me at the

same time I saw them, and spurred up their horses to cut me off. They left the road and took up the hillside to get ahead of me. "Old Steady" was swift of foot, and I let him out at full speed.

Just to my right was a rocky ridge; too rocky in fact, to give these men any advantage over me, in the cutting off line, but entirely too close for my safety.

I was sure they could reach the top of the ridge by the time I could reach a point opposite the point they could reach at the top of the hill and stand a mighty good chance to get me as I passed. I could hear their horses clattering over the rocks as they rushed up the gradual slope of the ridge on the other side.

I made old Steady let out a link or two more, and as I rushed past the place where they caught sight of me, I was a little ahead. They yelled at me to halt or they would fill me with lead.

I never slackened my speed or looked back but bent my head over my horse's neck, and urged him on.

I was going after the doctor, I had no time to stop to talk or parley or exchange opinions as to who would be our next president, or the

state of the weather, or the condition of the crops. My business lay rolling, and I intended to "roll."

I had maintained this gait for a mile farther and reached a part of the road that passed through thick timbers.

I was mad—mad clear through—in fact, hopping mad, and as I couldn't hop on horseback, I dismounted. I intended to give them my compliments if they came on after me, and let my "Beales" do the talking.

Most of the revolvers in those days were of the Beales pattern. The hammer had to be bent to one side to strike the tubes, just to the right of the frame that joins the butt to the barrel above and below the cylinder. They were good for one hundred yards, and reliable.

I hadn't waited more than one minute, when I saw them coming around the bend, and nerved myself up for a trying moment. I never ambushed or "bushwhacked" any one in my life, but here was a case that called for action out of the ordinary.

These men had tried to kill me, and had probably wounded my horse unto death, for I had not taken time to examine him.

When they entered the timber, they slowed

up and came on more cautious; as they came abreast of me with their pistols up ready to fire at anything that came in sight, I leveled my revolver and fired at the nearest one; then as quick as possible, fired again. My first shot took effect in the right shoulder of the white man that happened to be nearest to me. He had a scar on right cheek, I could plainly see. He fell over against the one next him, and my next shot wounded the other's horse. The two turned to run, for they must have thought they had more than one person to contend with. As they wheeled, the one that was hurt, fell to the ground, and the wounded horse began to buck and threw his rider. The fellow jumped and ran after his horse; the other took through the brush on the opposite side of the road from me.

I just stood still and watched the play, and never attempted to shoot again.

The fellow that got thrown kept on down the road after his horse. If he succeeded in catching him, I knew I would have two after me, so I had to look out. I mounted my horse and kept in the timber until I had gone perhaps two hundred yards, then struck the road and urged my horse to his best for half a mile;

then slowed up. I was then within four or five miles of the camp, and I felt more at ease. In another hour I was at camp.

Everyone greeted me with a hilarious shout. "Hello, Albert," from all sides came the greeting of "Hello, Albert." Everyone came crowding around me, for it was noon and all the miners had come in for their dinners. The women all inquired about Aunt Polly and the girls, and how they liked their new home. I told them they were all well and happy and liked their new home "bully."

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CHAPTER VIII.

Albert, Henry and Jim Take the Outlaws to Marysville—They Stay With the Hendrix Family Until the Year '60, and Then Go Home—The End.

One of the men began to unsaddle my horse. I lifted the back end of the saddle, when he untied the girth, and felt for the bullet I knew was there. I found it resting on the blanket, and had somewhat imbedded itself in the blanket. When I took it out I held it up, for several men were watching to see what I was doing, and when they saw it was a bullet I had taken from under the saddle, they wanted to know how it came there. I then related the little skirmish I had had with the outlaws as I came along.

“Why, Albert,” said Captain Edwards, “were you attacked as you came up the road?”

I told him I was, and I thought a bullet hit my hat, but I didn’t take time to examine it and finally forgot it, so I took my hat off then, and sure enough a bullet hole was found

through the rim back of my head. None of the men had noticed it, because the hole was small and the curl of the rim had kept it hidden.

“Now, gentlemen,” I said, “I have something to tell you before I answer any more questions.” I then related the episode of the attempted robbery at our new home and how the escort from this camp balked the bandits in their nefarious undertaking. “Now, I want the doctor to go with me to attend to those men who are wounded and try to keep them from dying on Uncle Billy’s hands.”

The doctor was willing to go, and sent one of the boys after his horse, while he made preparations. In the meantime, my horse was eating some barley the boys gave him and soon dinner was ready and part of the men sat down to eat. The doctor and I ate with them, to be ready, as soon as possible. While we were at the table Captain Edwards thought it would be a good plan to send four or five men along to guard us on our way back, but I told him I thought if there were no others on the road but those three, the doctor and I would be enough, and I was pretty sure one of them was pretty well knocked out, if not dead. He

thought it would be better to have at least four and the doctor and myself would make six, and if we met the wagons returning, these four could turn back.

As soon as our meal was over, we made ready to go; the four men who were to go with us, caught their horses and were soon ready. We mounted, and bidding our friends good-bye and receiving many requests from the women to give Aunt Polly and the girls their kindest regards, we galloped away.

When we reached the place where I had the last encounter with the robbers nothing was there; the one I had shot off his horse was gone. There were plenty of signs, however. The ground was trampled, and blood was an evidence where the man had lain.

We did not tarry long here, but continued our journey.

We saw nothing enroute to give us uneasiness. We passed several old camps where some mining had been done, but no one was there, all had been abandoned for new discoveries higher up in the mountains.

It was after dark when we arrived at home, and found Captain Edward's men camped just above our camp, on the creek.

The doctor went immediately into the little tent, improvised out of quilts, where those wounded men were lying, and made a hasty examination of their hurts. He found them in a pretty good fix, for the girls and Aunt Polly had been very attentive to them, bathing their wounds in cold water. Aunt Polly had torn up one of her best bed sheets to furnish bandages for their wounds.

Molly slipped around to me as soon as I had attended to my horse, and taking a seat, on the box near me, began to ask questions concerning my trip.

“Now, Albert, what made that hole in your hat rim?”

“What hole?” I said, for I did not like to blurt out just how it happened—not yet at least.

“Why, that hole there, don’t you see?” She reached to one of the chains standing near, and taking my hat from the back where it was hanging and pointing to the hole that had been shot in it from off the hill by those outlaws, said, “You didn’t shoot that hole in there yourself, did you?”

“No, Molly, I didn’t, that hole was shot there by someone from off the hill as I rode along,

and I was running, too, as fast as Old Steady could carry me."

She turned pale as I was telling this and as soon as I ceased talking, she jumped up and started into the tent and met Henry, Uncle Billy and all of them coming to question me, for the doctor had told them all he knew about my fight with the outlaws. Then I was questioned by all of the folks in turn, and Henry expressed a wish that he had been with me, and I wished the same, but the cowardly wretches might not have attacked the two of us.

Those men, who were wounded, had improved very much during the night and the next morning the doctor, after giving us directions how to treat the wounds, started back to the mining camp with the teams to have company.

Three days later, Uncle Billy told us boys to hitch a team to one of the wagons and take the men to town and turn them over to the authorities, and take an affidavit, not sworn to of course, because there was no justice of the peace there to attest to an affidavit.

When we had everything ready, the outlaws were not willing to be moved, they declared they were not able to ride in a jolty wagon.

We gave them to understand that they would have to go, even if they did not want to.

We had a large matress placed in the bottom of the wagon bed and quilts enough to make them a good bed.

Jim and I took the seat, and Henry rode his horse and kept behind to watch the prisoners.

Our first night we camped on the Yuba, fifteen miles from the town of Marysville. One of us stood guard all night, three hours each, and were off the next morning by sun up. We arrived in town about noon, for we were in a hurry to get rid of our prisoners, and drove straight to the court house.

The sheriff happened to be there and received the prisoners willingly, for the miners that did the shooting had given him full particulars of the whole transaction, and he was looking for them.

It seems that after those men fully recovered they broke jail and made their escape and were never heard from again.

We made our purchases and got our mail in time to drive out to the ranch, where the two outlaws had died.

The next day we arrived safe at home, to the great delight of all, for they were uneasy all

the time we were gone, for those men were desperate characters and the folks didn't know but that they might get the advantage of us some way and kill all three, take the wagon, and make a final "get-away."

It was now nearly the first of October, and we began to look for rainy weather. Uncle Billy had been busy all the time cutting logs and now we went to work in earnest.

The first thing was to build houses and the next was a stable and corral. In two weeks our houses were done, floors and windows in all of them. A saw mill had been erected a few miles up the Yuba the year before and lumber was plentiful. We obtained all the other necessary things at Marysville. By Christmas all our necessary work was finished, and the rainy weather was upon us in all its disagreeableness.

The grass was growing fine and the horses were in good order. Jim kept his part of the work up; that is, he caught all the fish that we wanted. Henry and I did our part in the hunting line. Deer and quail were plenty. Nellie and Molly hunted quail with my little rifle and could clip a quail's head off almost every shot. We passed a pleasant winter.

Our pastimes consisted during the long winter evenings in singing, playing on the violin and a small melodeon that had never been unpacked since it was packed back in Illinois more than a year ago. The girls could play pretty well, and by practice, could keep good time to Henry's violin.

It was thus we passed the first winter in our new home.

Early the following spring we dug a small ditch for irrigating purposes, and while one plowed, the others used pick and shovel.

Our first crop consisted of barley and garden stuff.

We did not, at that time, have to fence. There was not much stock running loose in this part of the country. Henry and I concluded to stay with Uncle Billy for some time yet, and when we got to look a little more like grown up men, we intended to take up land and improve it, and try to hold it until of age and so in the fall of fifty-nine, there was plenty of land joining Uncle Billy's land that could be taken, for emigrants were not coming to that part of California nearly as fast as they did just after the war. We had no trouble holding our claims as no one wanted them.

It is not necessary to relate all our doings for the next five years. Jim Brown went home that spring, fifty-six, and Henry and I remained with the Hendrixes, and helped them part of the time. In fact, all of the time, until the summer of fifty-nine, when we went to work for ourselves.

My mother wanted me to come home. I had sent her two thousand dollars as soon as the stage line was permanently established, and the money had come in good time for she had got in debt and had to mortgage the little farm and the time had almost expired.

Early in the spring of sixty, we made preparations to return to our old Missouri home. Molly and I, and Henry and Nelie were engaged to be married the following year. We wanted our mothers there, for Henry's Aunt was a mother to him, and he wanted to return the next year and bring our folks with us. We little thought of what would happen in another year to make all our best laid plans "gang aglee."

A large party of returning miners were assembled at Placerville.

It was the intention of this outfit to start the first of June. That was rather late, but

you can't start from the Pacific Coast as early as from the Atlantic for the Sierra Nevada mountains are a barrier that precludes any such attempt.

We had helped Uncle Billy to plant his crops of more than one hundred acres, and also planted a few acres on our own. You see by this time all of our land was fenced, and that alone would cause land seekers to overlook our claims. When we located our claims, Henry was of age, but your humble servant was not.

As the time grew near, I became more and more reluctant to go. I wanted to see my mother and sisters, but I was loathe to leave my "little Mary."

The evening before we started, she and I strolled up the creek to a large log that had been our trysting place many times and sat down. She was crying, and I was nearly doing so.

"Molly, don't cry, dear, I am coming back next summer, then we will be married, Henry and Nellie, you and I, and my people will be here and we will be as happy as the day is long."

We sat there and talked till the growing darkness warned us that it was time to return

to the house. Henry and Nellie were just returning from a late tryst and both were too sad to say much. I could see Nellie had been crying. Aunt Polly looked as if she had not refrained from shedding tears at the thought of our leaving them, and Uncle Billy had but little to say and looked glum.

We had an early breakfast next morning, then rolled our blankets and made ready to start on our long journey. Our horses stood in the stable and had all they could eat, and were in good trim for the trip. They were getting old now, and were not as supple as usual, but were still good travelers. When we got ready to mount, Uncle Billy shook hands with both of us and was actually crying. It was the first time I had ever seen him cry.

Aunt Polly cried like a child and could hardly talk.

Molly came up and placed her arms around my neck and burst into loud lamentations.

“Oh, Albert, I don’t want you to go.”

“Yes, Molly. I must go, but I shall surely come back,” I told her. Then her mother came and gently took her hands and soothed her and then I mounted my horse. Henry had already mounted. Aunt Polly then gave us a

letter she had sat up half of the night, writing to my mother and told me to give it to her as soon as I reached home.

Then we bade them all a general farewell and rode away—away for how long? Time alone will tell.

We reached the ranch where the two outlaws died about dark. As we rode up the rancher was standing in the yard, and knew us immediately.

“Hello, Henry! Hello, Albert!” was his greeting. “Get right down, and I’ll put your horses up; go in and talk to the woman, and I’ll be in soon.”

This was always his manner of greeting us; in fact, most all Californians are the same. Western men in general are hospitable, and will give you the best they have, and think nothing of it.

We spent a pleasant evening with the ranchman and his family, retired early, and the next morning were off at sunrise. It stood us in hand to loose no time, for the train was then almost ready to start.

We reached Marysville early in the forenoon and repaired immediately to the bank. The clerk knew us and no time was lost hunting

references, and in a few minutes our business was completed, and we were off.

It is about fifty miles from Marysville to Placerville, and by noon the next day we arrived at the latter place.

We found everybody in a rush. It was sometime before we could find anyone that would take us in, for so many wanted to return to the states, the wagons were already crowded.

All we wanted, of course, was just some one to mess with, and haul our bedding.

We had received most of our money in bank drafts, payable to ourselves only, and felt pretty safe so far as being robbed was concerned.

We had drawn Jake Wamsley's money the same way, but had drawn out a few ounces of the pure gold to give her as some Jake had washed himself. We knew that would please her. We would have sent her part of it if we had known her address. Jim Brown told us he would look her up if he could, but he never said anything about her in any of his letters, so we concluded he had either neglected it, or had failed to find her.

We finally found an old couple that was going back with nothing but a very small

wagon and a smaller team, but as they had but little to haul and we had but little also, it would not be much trouble, so they said.

This old man and his wife had come to California two years previously with a son, a young man twenty years old, and the fall before he had died and left his parents destitute, and they now were going back on the bounty of the families that were going also.

That night in our talk we learned the name of the man to be Miller, and he had married his wife, who was a Georgia woman and had come from Georgia twenty-five years ago. It could be seen that she was from the south by her talk. She said she had a brother go to California six years ago and had never heard from him, and she supposed he had been killed by the Indians or robbers long ago.

While the old couple were talking, I was thinking hard, and I noticed Henry had something on his mind also. Then I said: "Mrs. Miller what was your name before you were married?"

She answered: "Wamsley."

I sprang to my feet with a yell. "What," I said, "was Jake Wamsley your brother?"

"Why, did you know Jake Wamsley?" she screamed. "My brother, Jake!"

"Sure, we did," said Henry, "and that ain't all; we have Jake's share of the money we made mining five years ago."

"Then, where," she said, "is my brother, Jake?"

Henry, nor I spoke for several seconds. We did not like to blurt out he was dead, so we hesitated, and by that, she knew Jake was dead.

"Oh, I know Jake is dead; you needn't tell me he is dead."

"Yes," we said, "he is dead, killed by a band of Indians that attacked our camp five years ago, and before he died he told us about you. He wanted you to get his share of the money. You see, we all went in as equal partners, and when we quit mining, we divided up. The fight took place nearly a month before we actually quit mining, but Jake's share at the time was over twenty-nine thousand dollars, and we have it right here in bank drafts.

"Oh, John," said the old lady, as she turned to her husband. "What great luck to come with such sad news. I am afraid I won't enjoy

it now, I wish you hadn't told us about the money, yet." And she was in earnest.

We knew that we had found the right party, and turned the money over to her. The drafts had been drawn in her name, and all we had to do was simply to hand over the papers and the little sack of gold, and told her at the same time, that was some of the gold Jake washed out himself.

"Yes," she said, "Jake understood mining. He mined in Georgia, years before we moved to Missouri."

The following morning the whole train was on the move. This was the year, 1860, and startling events were to happen before another year rolled around.

Henry and I began letters to our friends we had just left, and intended adding a few lines every time we camped, so that we could send them back if we should meet a stage or party of emigrants going west. By that means we sent back two letters each, while on the road.

We had no trouble on our way to the states, only one morning a small band of Utes tried to stampede our stock, but there were too many guards out, and all they got for their trouble was a shower of leaden bullets, and four of

them fell, while the others were very willing to get away as fast as their horses could carry them.

We moved along and had no more trouble, and on the first day of August, we all pulled into Kansas City in good condition.

It was at that place we split up and bade each other good-bye; but Mr. Miller and his wife kept on, as their route lay the same as Henry's and mine.

We kept together for some time.

When we reached Booneville, the old couple bade us good-bye. Their route lay down the river and ours lay south.

About the middle of the afternoon of the second day out from Booneville, we were riding along the lane that separates Uncle Andy Tommyhill's farm from one of his neighbors, and saw the old gentleman mowing a little patch of grass close to the road.

"Let's have some fun out of the old man, Henry," I said, "now, let's see if he will know us." He and I had both changed, but I had changed more than Henry. I was five feet, ten, and Henry five feet, seven. He was always rather squat and heavy set. He weighed as

much as I, but was shorter. I knew Uncle Andy would know him first, anyhow.

The old man was working away, close to the fence and did not see us until we were just opposite. Then he looked up and said. "Howdy." We nodded our heads and said nothing, just then.

"Well, Uncle Andy, don't you know us?" said Henry.

"No, I don't think I do," he drawled. Then he dropped his scythe and came to the fence, and looked long and steadily at us for several seconds. Then he said, "If that ain't Henry Zimmerman, then who is it?"

"It's Henry, all right," replied Henry, and then the old man began to climb the fence and got right down between us and grabbed Henry's hand and began to pump with all his might. Then turning to me he said, "Well who is this you have with you, Henry?"

"Why, don't you know him?"

"No, I don't, unless, unless"—then he stopped and gazed at me for quite a while. I sat on my horse and smiled down at him, waiting to see if he would make me out. Finally, he grabbed me around the waist and pulled and hauled me and exclaimed all the time, "It's

Albert! it's Albert! Why Albert your mother will be tickled to death to see you. My, how you have grown. Why, Henry, he is taller than you."

"Yes," said Henry, "he had the impudence to keep on growing when I stopped."

"Well, now, boys, your folks will want to see you and you them, so don't tarry here too long. I don't want to keep you, but don't you fail to come and see me. I want to talk to you about your life in California."

We told him we would be sure and visit him and then rode away.

Henry was to go home with me first, and then I would go with him.

It was a mile nearer my home than to his house, so we made that arrangement.

I was getting nervous, and excited. Being gone more than six years from one's home, is enough to excite a boy. When we rode up to the house my mother was in the garden, and on seeing two men ride up and stop, she came around to the front and looked inquiringly at us. I jumped off my horse, and not taking time to unlatch the gate, bursted it open and rushed toward her saying, "Mother, mother, don't you know me?"

She faintly articulated, "Albert," then came staggering toward me. I gathered her in my arms and began raining kisses on her dear old face and paid no attention to Henry, who had got down and hitched both horses and came inside, and was standing, waiting.

"Mother, do you know who this is with me?" She looked up and seeing Henry, she said, "No, I don't think I do, is it Henry Zimmerman?"

"That's right," I said, and Henry came forward and shook hands with her.

"Why, Henry, you have changed, but not so much as Albert; just see how he has grown. I never would have known him on earth, if he hadn't spoken. Why, Henry, your Aunt will be overjoyed to see you."

"Yes," I said, "but he is going to stay with me tonight, and then I am going home with him to keep his aunt from turning cannibal and eating him up."

"Now, boys, you must take care of your horses; they are standing there hitched with their saddles on and long guns enough to weight them down. Albert is that your father's old rifle you brought back with you?" my mother asked.

"Yes, it's the same old gun," I said, "and Henry has brought the same one he took off and we have done some shooting with them, too."

Mother followed us out, when we went to unsaddle our horses, and rubbed Old Steady's nose. I really believe the old fellow knew her. I noticed he got interested as we came along. He would raise his head and look all around and whinny. He knew the country, and when we came in sight of his old home, he was actually delighted.

"Boys," suddenly exclaimed my mother, "here comes Alice! Go around back of the house and let her guess who's come."

She had told us just before we came out that Alice had gone to one of the neighbor's and would soon return. But she had not told me about the other girls, yet; she had not had time. Henry and I slipped around back of the house and came into the back room—one I had occupied all my life until I started west six years before.

Pretty soon we heard mother and Alice come in. Then Alice wanted to know whose horses those were hitched to the fence.

"Now, mother, I know some one has come.

Who is it? Now, you can't fool me, mother, I know Albert has come. Where is he?"

She was getting more excited all the time, so I opened the door and stepped into the sitting room. When she saw me she started back as if she had seen me for the first time in her life. She didn't know me from Adams's off ox. Mother was watching her and when she stepped back so suddenly, mother laughed outright. Then Alice knew it was her long lost brother. She gave a little cry, and came bounding into my arms.

"Oh, Albert! I'm so glad to see you again."

All this time she was crying and sobbing on my breast. She had not seen Henry yet, so I told her some one else was to tell her "howdy." She looked up and saw Henry standing in the room and stared at him; she did not know him, either.

"Why!" said he, "don't you know me, Alice?"

Then she recognized him and gave him her hand in a kind of timid manner.

When the excitement was all over, I began to ask questions about the other girls.

"Molly is still living where she and Billy were living when you went away, and Lucy,

and her man, are living over on the prairie."

"Lucy." I said, "is Lucy married?"

"Yes," said she, "Lucy has been married over a year. Didn't you get my letter about it?"

"No, I did not, I replied. "The mails of California are very uncertain, and I don't believe half the mail that is started from this country ever reach there."

After our evening meal was over, we talked till late, and I never thought of Aunt Polly's letter until we were nearly ready to retire. Then I went to my coat, which was hanging on the wall, and took out the letter and handed it to mother.

"There's a letter Aunt Polly Hendrix sent you, mother. She said if I carried it you might get it sooner than if she sent it by mail."

She took it somewhat eagerly and drawing the chair nearer the light, began to read it with a great deal of interest. She would look at me once in a while with a smile on her face, and I was sure Aunt Polly had written something about me.

The next morning I went home with Henry, and he did come mighty near being eaten up bodily, for his Aunt was so overjoyed at see-

ing him, she came near fainting dead away. After she got through with him, she came to me and hugged and kissed me over and over, for I was her favorite next to Henry. I remained over night, and the next morning returned home. I had plenty of money and enjoyed myself visiting my sisters and friends, for I had many friends.

Henry and I kept up a regular correspondence with our California friends. We never neglected them, nor they us.

Henry and I worked on our respective farms until the fateful thirteenth of April, 1861, and when Lincoln called for volunteers, we were the first to enlist in our county.

We wrote to our friends in California and they returned answer to stick to it and fight for our country and never to go back on "Old Abe."

And now, dear reader, my story is done. I shall tell you how we suffered and almost died for the cause in my next story, which I shall call: "The Captive Maidens, or the Prizes Won." A story of the early settlement of Northern California.

THE END.



THE
CAPTIVE MAIDENS

OR

THE PRIZES WON

A SEQUEL TO
ACROSS THE PLAINS IN 54

And by the Author of "Across the Plains in 54"

A Story of the early settlement
of Northern California

CHAPTER I.

Late in the fall of 1864, two men were riding along the road, leading west from St. Louis, in earnest conversation. The road was dry and in good condition, and rendered traveling a pleasant pastime. The oldest of these two was Henry Zimmerman, and his companion was myself, Albert Mayhue. We had just been discharged from the army, and were on our way home. We had joined the army in '61, for three months, had served out the time, reinlisted, and were now on our way home after serving a second term, this time, three years in duration.

We were jubilant over the successful termination of our army life, and were rejoicing because we would soon be among our friends and relatives. Henry had been badly wounded at Shiloh, and for his bravery, had been promoted from first sergeant to the office of second lieutenant. I, being first sergeant of the line, was made orderly sergeant; that is, one who calls the roll and keeps the company's books. At the battle of Corinth, I received a severe wound, but soon recovered.

The old horses that carried us to California, we had left at home when we enlisted at the breaking out of the War, for we had joined the Infantry and needed no horses. But at St. Louis, we had purchased each of us a good horse, saddle and bridle; also a Henry rifle and Colts revolver. Those Henry rifles at that time were considered terrible weapons, and were, because no other rifle could surpass them in accuracy, and their carrying power was far ahead of the old muzzle-loader. There were at that time, in the breech-loading line of guns, the Spencer, Sharps, Maynard, and Hall rifles. The latter was used largely by the Texas Rangers before the War, but none of those rifles used the metallic cartridge, except the Henry, Spencer and Maynard; all others used paper cartridges.

On the third day out from St. Louis, we were nearing our homes and about sunset, we reached Henry's home. But what a change! No fences, no houses, but one poor little shanty that had been used for a wood shed, and an old barn had been left standing. All other buildings and most of the fence rails had been burned by a large body of Price's men, who, on their raid through the State that year, had camped there

and burned the fence rails, but the dwelling house had caught fire through carelessness by the Confederates, and they worked like sea-horses carrying things out, and the old lady had sustained no loss in her household goods. We rode up to the little house; seeing a rough-clad old man sitting on the door sill smoking a pipe.

“Howdy, strangers,” he exclaimed as we rode up. He did not appear to be the least surprised at our sudden appearance, for we were still dressed in our uniforms as we came out of the Army, and carried our rifles and revolvers in plain view.

“What is the matter here anyhow?” said Henry, for he was considerably agitated and could hardly sit still in his saddle. “What’s become of the folks that lived here, and what does all this mean?” he asked, as he waved his hand around, indicating the burned hours and general desolation of the place.

“Well, you see, mister,” the old man replied, “The Rebs camped here a short time last summer and made a general cleaning up, though the house was set fire by accident, but everything was saved that was in the house.”

“Well, where is Mrs. Strong?”

“Why, she is livin’ with Miss Mayhue, over on the Crick.”

“And what are you doing here?” Henry asked.

“Me? Oh, I’m workin’ for Miss Strong, rebuildin’ her houses and fences.”

“Let’s go, Albert,” said Henry, and wheeling our horses, we started off in a swift gallop, and never drew rein until we reached Uncle Andy Tonnyhills’ house. The old gentleman was out in the yard looking very disconsolate.

“Hello, Uncle Andy,” we both shouted as soon as we rode up. He took a rather long stare, and came walking toward us, and leaning over the fence, asked if we were an advance guard of a command coming.

“No, Uncle Andy, don’t you know us?” said Henry.

“Why, law me!” said he; and opened the gate and came toward us with outstretched arms. “Why, it’s Henry and Albert, as sure as I live; have you been discharged?”

“Sure, we have, Uncle Andy,” we both exclaimed, “and how are our folks at home?”

“All well, I believe; and your aunt, Henry, is living with Albert’s mother.”

"Yes," said Henry, "we learned that up home, or what is left of it."

"Then you came by your old home, did you, Henry?" the old man asked.

"Yes, who is it that Aunt Tildy has working there?"

"Oh, he is an old fellow your aunt has hired to build her house and repair fences. His name is Weeks."

By this time it was growing dark, and bidding the old man goodnight, we rode on home, for it was Henry's home now as well as mine. By the time we reached home, lights were shining through the windows. We were considerably worked up; we had not seen our homes or anyone of our neighborhood for more than three years, and it was like one returning from the dead—our coming now—for the folks had not heard from us since our last little fight at Henryville, November the 23rd, I think it was. It was just after that fight, we both wrote home, stating our terms of service were up, and we would be discharged very soon. Our officers had tried to get us to join the veteran corps, but we steadily refused to do so. We had come to the conclusion that three years

and three months service was enough at one time, and we didn't want any more.

When we rode up to the little gate just in front of the house, I shouted, "Hello." No one answered; then Henry hollered a little louder than I did, and pretty soon, the door was opened, and I saw Alice standing in the door; I knew it was her as soon as she came in sight, though I couldn't see her face.

"Hello, Alice," I said, "How are all the folks?" Then Henry had to laugh, and she knew his laugh better than she knew my voice. She gave a little scream, and cried out: "Oh, mother, Albert and Henry have come!" Then she came bounding out to us. We had dismounted by this time, and hitched our horses, and had dashed through the gate, when Alice rushed into my arms. Mother and Aunt Tildy had reached the yard by this time, and as Henry and Aunt Tildy rushed into each others' arms, I grabbed my mother and began swinging her around, for she was lighter than Alice.

After our greeting was over, we went into the house; then mother and Aunt Tildy began asking questions. We told them all about our Army life, and finally, I asked mother: "What

has come over Uncle Andy; he don't appear as friendly as he used to be?"

"Why, don't you know," said she.

"Can't say that I do," I replied.

"Why, he is a secessionist; he lent strongly to the South; he has now two nephews in the Southern Army."

This was news to me, and Henry, also. The fact is, Henry and I had joined the army so early, we had no idea how our neighbors had decided the question of secession and co-operation for themselves. We sat up late that night, for we had a great deal to talk about.

The returning home of several soldiers during the fall and winter of sixty-four was attended with some little danger. There were a few strong families still in that part of the country that lent very decidedly to the South, and all of them had a son or two, or a relative, in the Confederate Army. We were determined, however, to get along the best we could with all our neighbors, and then as soon as we could, start for California.

I remember Henry and I attended a dance that came near ending in a tragedy. The dance was held at a house some four or five miles from our home, and was attended largely by

those living in another neighborhood. Several young fellows were there that had relatives in the Southern Army, and didn't think a "Yank" had any business there at all. The dance had progressed far into the night; Henry and I had both noticed those young men, or boys, rather, for they were not over eighteen at most, that had been showing a disposition to slight us. They had already cast some aspersions on the "Yanks" in general, and ourselves in particular. We knew we had friends there; men that would see us through any little, or big difficulty, as to the matter, if it were necessary. We paid no attention to these slights for some time, until one of them, who was not dancing, happened to be sitting on a box near the set in which we were dancing, and, as we were promenading, he threw out his foot and tripped Henry up, and as he fell, his foot caught in the skirt of the young lady he was dancing with, and threw her down, also. This created tremendous excitement instantly, for I was right behind Henry, and saw the manoeuvre. Telling my partner to go and sit down, I wheeled around and kicked the fellow squarely in the mouth. Henry had sprang to his feet, for he was as active as a cat, then

turned his attention to the cause of the disturbance. There were perhaps a dozen persons that saw the action of the bigoted young fool; friends as well as enemies. Henry had just assisted the young lady to her feet, and when I gave the kick that almost lifted him off his feet, Henry gave him a left-handed blow that sent him sprawling on the floor.

Henry and I had no arms, and I don't think there was one in the house that was armed with anything better than a pocket knife. We were now pretty badly mixed up. Our friends had immediately taken a hand in the row, and the fight became general. Our side, being a little the stronger, soon had full possession. The proprietor, happened to be on our side, and ordered those fellows that sided with the one that tripped Henry, to leave the house, and do it instantly, or suffer the consequences. They sullenly mounted their horses and rode off.

This was the only trouble we ever had in that country.

Henry and I busied ourselves through the winter making up a company to go to California the next spring. We succeeded in persuading five families to emmigrate, besides my two married sisters, Billy Goodman and Charley

Crawford, Lucy's husband, and a distant cousin of my mother, also, making in all, eight families. We expected to join a large emmigration train at Wyandotte, now Kansas City, Kansas, and go on with them. They were scheduled to start the fifteenth of May.

By the first of May, we were ready to start; mother and my brothers-in-law had sold their farms, but Aunt Tildy had not tried to sell hers, but leased it out to one of the neighbors—to rebuild the fences and houses. She had enough money to go on, and Henry had nearly all the money he fetched from California five years before.

It was not necessary to start before the seventh of the month.

Lucy and her husband lived several miles away, and as soon as they sold out, moved over to our place, and soon after that, Molly and Billy did the same. We were now all together and ready to start any time.

The time soon rolled around when we bade our neighbors good-bye, for scores of them had come to see us off.

The War had ended, and all those of Southern proclivities had accepted their defeat and concluded to make the most of it.

Andy Tonnyhill had become more reconciled, and had been quite friendly all winter, and had come up to bid us good-bye. We all thought a great deal of the old man, and he knew it, so he didn't remain sulky very long. I almost forgot to say his wife had died during the War, and had left him disconsolate.

On the seventh of May, 1865, we bade farewell to our many friends and started on our long journey to the "Golden West."

Our old horses now were too old to be of any use on the road, and we gave them to one of our neighbors. He agreed to take care of them, just because they were "old Californians." Our old rifles also were given to two of our neighbor boys, for they were now so out of date and heavy, we didn't want to haul them in the wagons. We also had discarded the old Beals revolvers, for we had purchased a Colts Navy each at St. Louis.

On the second day out, Henry and I were riding our horses and had fallen somewhat behind the train. A man and his wife had turned out to let the heavy wagon pass. While he sat there in his wagon, he had been looking at us, as we came up, and as soon as we were in good speaking distance, he yelled out:

We had noticed him in the wagon while we were quite a ways back, but hadn't the least idea who he was, but now we saw it was none other than our old friend, Jim Brown.

"Henry and Albert, true as I live. Why, where are you mozying off to now?"

"Why, Hello, Jim," we both hollowed at the same time, and spurred up to shake hands with him. "Do you live in this neighborhood?"

"Yes, down the road a mile or so. Where are you going, now? Back to old Cali?"

"Yes," we told him. Then he introduced us to his little Indiana girl, as he called her when he wrote to us after he returned home.

"Henry, you and Albert remember, of course, old man Miller and his wife that you came back with?"

"Yes, what about him?" we asked.

"Why, he lives not very far from here; his wife died last winter, and didn't you turn over Jake's money to them?"

"Yes, we did," we replied, "and I suppose he is away up in business, now."

"Yes, away up in business," said Jim, and he and his wife both smiled. "Why, you ought to see the old fellow, if he is sober enough

to talk. Why, he hasn't got enough to bury him decently: he just drank it up. Didn't you give him something like twenty-nine thousand dollars?"

"Yes," said Henry, "I turned over to his wife over twenty-nine thousand dollars the day we met them at Placerville, five years ago."

"He has gone through with every dollar of it, and could spend twice as much more if he had it," said Jim.

"The old wretch!" we exclaimed.

Our wagons were by this time out of sight, so we bade Jim and his wife good-bye, and rode on and soon caught up with our teams.

That night in our third camp, we spent, most of us, writing letters to our friends in California, and back in our old Missouri homes.

When we arrived at Wyandotte, we found a large party of men, women and children, eager to be on the road. But those in command, thought it would be better to wait until the specified time before starting, as that would give others that might be on the road, an opportunity to join us—and the more, the safer.

We had arrived at the place of rendezvous four days ahead of time, which gave our teams a little rest. Our time was spent in various

ways. Four days more to wait; but we didn't care, as the season was early and grass was getting better all the time. We occasionally went fishing up the Kaw, and most always succeeded in bringing in a good supply of fish.

The fifteenth of May rolled around, and preparations were made for our final start. There were now about one hundred wagons and two hundred men; most of them young and unmarried, and quite a few soldiers, who had just been discharged from the Army.

Our route lay up the Kaw till we reached the Blue river; then up that stream to what was known as Blue Springs; then across the rolling prairie to Ft. Kearney on the Platt; and now, Henry and I, were on familiar ground, and here we met with another crowd of immigrants that were waiting us, for they heard we were coming. This swelled our company to two hundred and fifty men and one hundred and thirty wagons.

It had been noised around that Henry and I had been to California, and it was suggested that we take charge of the scouting, and of the disposition of the train. This we agreed to do, if they would all agree to be governed by the train boss. This was also agreed to;

so we concluded to lay by a couple of days and drill all hands, so that everyone would know his place, in case we were attacked by the Indians.

Henry and I made the agreement that I should take charge of the scouting, and he would attend to the train. So we went right to work.

The first thing to attend to was numbering the wagons, and the next thing was to instruct the drivers how to corral them. I, at the same time, was training ten of the young fellows that had served in the army, for they were better able than any others, to do the scouting. I was very lucky in my choice of men, for all of them had been in the cavalry, and knew how to use a pistol. Then I told them what would be expected of them, and the business was arranged somewhat similar to the arrangement we had in fifty-four.

On the third day after arriving at the Fort, we pulled out. Every driver started as his number was called, and after that, he did not have to be told when to start, for the number on the tail-gate of the wagon just ahead gave him the clew.

Our wagons this time, instead of being at

the extreme rear of the train, were near the center, and really the safest place in the train, as in the corraling, the center is harder to break, and also equally in communication with both ends of the train. This was an advantage not to be dispised, and we were glad it happened that way.

In order to give the men a lesson in corraling, we had them go through the maneuvre, and as soon as the wagons were strung out, the order was given to "Corral Train." The first wagon immediately pulled out to the right, and the young fellow that was driving the second team, attempted to do the same, but Henry was at hand and yelled at him to pull to the left, then rode on back and told this one and that one to pull to the right, pull to the left, pull to the right, pull to the left, and so on until all were going in the right direction. I was at the head of the train, and when I saw the foremost wagons were far enough to draw in, I showed them how to do it. Henry, being at the rear by this time, showed the drivers how to bring their wagons in with the rear ends close together, and the corral was complete. This one maneuvre alone was sufficient, for we corraled a great many times after that and never had any trouble.

CHAPTER II.

Then the wagons strung out again, and we were on the way. I gave my scouts their orders how to manage, and taking four men and telling the other six to go ahead and keep about one mile ahead of the train, and at the same time keep a sharp lookout on all sides as well as ahead, I then took my four men and started out over the hills to the right. We kept about one mile from the road, as well as the lay of the land would allow, and rode this way until noon. It was understood that if we got an early start, to camp at noon for dinner every day, and corral the wagons each time.

We traveled quietly along in this manner for three days, and had seen no sign of Indians, and most of the immigrants had forgotten there ever was such an animal as a red-skin. But about the middle of the afternoon of the fourth day out from Kerney, as my four scouts and I were ascending a low ridge, the five of us saw at the same time about a dozen Indians coming over on another ridge about a mile to our right. We were now some two miles from the road, and about opposite the train, for we

had seen them just before ascending the ridge. I sent two men posthaste to give the alarm, and have the train corralled immediately. The other three of us stayed and watched the redskins to see what they intended to do. The ridge ahead of us and a little to the right was higher than the one we were on, and we made for that as fast as we could go. When we reached the top of this ridge, my fears were fully realized, for they were going in the direction I thought they would, if they knew our train was in the vicinity—and they certainly did—for they had turned west, and were going as fast as their ponies could carry them. We thought there were more of them further back.

I yelled to the boys to make for the train with all speed, for we had no time to lose. But our fears were groundless, for they never came into view. When we came in sight of the wagons, they were corraling, and had almost completed the task, but they were more than half a mile ahead of us. It seems we had traveled slower than the teams.

When we reached the train, everybody was excited. I told them to keep cool; that we outnumbered them more than two to one, and

that I didn't believe they would attack the train when they saw we were ready for them. The women were, some of them, at least, were more excited than the men, and were causing some trouble. I talked to them, and seeing I was not scared, they became more quiet. Henry was at the head of the train, and I galloped up to where he was and asked him if he had seen the Indians yet. Then we heard, suddenly, a volley of rifle shots just around the point of a ridge a half mile ahead. I yelled: "They're into it boys; come, a dozen of you that are mounted, and let's go to their assistance. Henry, watch for the others."

Some forty or fifty men started, but Henry stopped them, and told them it would never do to leave the train without a sufficient force to protect it. Then the most of them turned back, while about twelve of us kept on, and when we turned a point, we saw how matters stood.

It seems the five scouts that were ahead of the train had allowed themselves to be almost surprised. The Indians doubled the point of another ridge just ahead of them, and were almost upon them before they knew an Indian was in the vicinity. On the west side of the

point, they had just passed, there was a collection of large rocks, and to this they immediately repaired, and were keeping the redskins at bay. They were all armed with Henry rifles and Colts revolvers, and were pouring shots into them that had completely demoralized them, and when we turned the point in plain sight, they thought there were more of us than they had bargained for or expected, and made off as fast as they could.

The scouts were not more than one hundred yards from the road, and gave a cheer as we came into view. One horse had been killed, and two of the scouts were wounded, but not severely.

“Now, boys,” I said, “a few of us must watch those red rascals and see what they are going to do.”

The two that were hurt by arrows went back to the train with the others, and eight went with me.

The saddle of the dead horse was taken off, and left by the road to be picked up as the train passed. We didn’t think the small band in the rear would bother. I and the eight scouts started in pursuit of the Indians, and

by climbing the ridge just at hand, we caught sight of them going over a hill a mile away.

I didn't like this move of theirs, for I believed their intention was to try to ambush us as we pass along when we resumed our journey either that evening or the next day. The sequel proved we hadn't yet got rid of our wily foes. I knew we were rid of them for the time being, and told the boys we would ride back to the train and see what the company was going to do—whether go on or camp where they were till morning.

After I had made my report, and told them I didn't believe the Indians intended to molest us any more that day, we all voted to go on a few miles farther and find a better place to camp. We did so, and going some three miles farther, we found a little stream coming down from the hills to the right, and concluded to make our camp at that place. We corralled our train so the foremost wagons were just at the bank of the little creek, and made the corral round, in order to bring the rear wagons closer to the creek. In forming our corral and placing the numbers in such a way to bring the wagon of each family together, when corralled, it made it more convenient. This method

was adheared to all the way to California.

I, and the scouts, were not idle. We rode around the camp all night; that is, by taking turns. Four of us were in the saddle all the time, and went singly, by keeping two or three hundred yards apart, and about one half mile from camp. This was done every night, but the other men of the train had taken turns in guarding the camp. Tonight, however, I wanted the scouts to do this work, for I had given a good many instructions in regard to Indian methods. When it came my turn to sleep, I didn't sleep very much, as I was very uneasy. But the night passed away without any disturbance.

The next morning early, and while breakfast was in progress, Henry and I had a long talk about the Indians, who, I believed, were waiting for us somewhere ahead to pounce upon us, if possible unawares, but if they thought we were going to be caught napping, they were off their base a long way.

It stood us in hand to be very watchful at that time, and in that particular locality, for more immigrants had been attacked along here than at any other place on the whole route across the plains.

This time I took twenty men, and after climbing the bluffs north of the road, I divided the squad in two equal parts, and appointed one of the men who had been in the army to command one squad, and I took charge of the other. I instructed the commander of the second company of scouts to keep not more than one mile from the train, and to keep the train in view most of the time, and if anything went wrong, to report to me, if possible, and to Henry Zimmerman, sure.

The train was in motion by this time, and everything looked like we were going to have an easy time for that day, at least. But looks are often deceiving, as the sequel will prove.

I, and my part of the company of scouts, started due north, and never drew rein until we were fully three miles from the road. Then we turned west. I had given the man that was placed in command of the advance squad strict orders not to pass any place that could conceal an Indian without investigation, and to be sure to keep an eye out for any indications or signs of Indians, and if he saw any, to be sure to report back to the train.

On that day, at least, every man, woman and

child was on the quivre, and it would have been impossible to surprise them.

After we had gone perhaps ten miles, we heard rapid firing off to our left, and somewhat in advance. We halted and listened; sure that was firing. The men wanted to go to the train, but I told them to wait; something would turn up for us pretty soon, I thought; and I was not mistaken, for on looking over to the northeast, there was a large band of Indians, cutting in behind us and making for the train as fast as they could go. If we had kept pace with the wagons, we were about opposite, and could reach the train ahead of the Indians. The red rascals had not seen us, I was pretty sure, for if they had, they would have given us battle first, or tried to slip around and not be seen by us, at least.

"Now, boys," I said, "It is time to go to the train as quick as our horses can take us." So we started at full speed, and never drew rein until we raised a hill in full view of the train.

We found them in readiness, for the advance squad had given warning and Henry had done his part admirably. Part of the men had returned from the advance squad, and reported

one of our men killed. I told them not to say anything about it yet, as it would cause undue excitement.

Just then we saw about two hundred Indians coming over the ridge a full half mile to our rear. It seems they had made a miscalculation of our situation, and had struck the valley behind us. When they saw that we were ready, they halted and seemed to hold a consultation, but it did not last long. I was sure they would attack us, and sent four well armed and well mounted men ahead to call in the advance squad, and go quick. The men were already mounted, and started immediately. It was no use, however, for just then we saw them turning a bend in the road, and were soon in the corral, carrying the dead man with them. It so happened that he was one of my soldier scouts, and had no family; but he was mourned sadly for all that.

It was time now to begin to look to our safety, for the Indians had started on the keen jump, yelling like demons, and as soon as they thought they were in reach, let fly a shower of arrows. They then began their accustomed circular movement around, and filling the air with arrows. We had all the

women and children in comparative safety, by placing them behind the wagons. Several horses were hit, but not severely. One horse had an arrow sent clear through him in the paunch. The arrow was pulled out and the horse eventually recovered.

Now the battle was raging; guns were crackling in a continuous roar. No white man had been hit, but Indians were falling by the score. Our men were strung out about five feet apart, and every man had at least a good revolver, and most of them breech-loading rifles or carbines, and every man was doing his duty. It is impossible for a band of men, especially Indians, to stand such slaughter very long, and before they had gone two-thirds around the corral, they gave a few wailing howls, and took to the hills; but we kept up the firing as long as one was in sight.

I told the scouts to mount their horses and follow them a few miles, and see if they left the country, or what they did.

Henry and a few of the other men, together with the Doctor, for we had a doctor, attended to the injured. We found the battle had cost us three killed, counting the one killed with the advance guards, and four wounded, count-

ing one woman, that had been shot in the knee with an arrow. We also found seventeen horses with arrows sticking in them, and relieved them as quickly as possible.

The fight took place about ten o'clock, and didn't last ten minutes, and by one o'clock, those who had been killed were buried, and the wounded in as good condition as circumstances would allow.

About three o'clock the scouts returned, and reported that the redskins had cleared out. They watched them until they had gone at least fifteen miles or more. We concluded to pull out about two miles farther to a good camping place, and camp for the night.

Several men were detailed to stay back and count the dead Indians and to see if any of their friends returned. All of the ponies had escaped with those that ran away, and some of them dragged their riders with them, as it is often the practice of the plains Indians to tie themselves to their saddles.

About dark, and after we had corraled and had everything in shape, those that had been left at the scene of our late encounter, came in. They reported seventy-four dead on the ground, and five on the hillside, killed as they

ran up the ridge to get out of reach of the best guns then in existence; besides those that had been dragged off by their ponies, making in all, perhaps, about a hundred.

There was considerable sorrow and weeping in camp that night, for the two that were killed in the fight at the corral had relatives as well as friends in the command. One young man was the son of a lonely widow, and was her only stay and support. Her cries were heart-rending, and she could not be comforted. Everyone in the train felt pity for her, and her friends tried to sooth her all that was possible. She was pretty well fixed; had a good team and wagon, also some money, and was not destitute.

In a few days, we had passed out of the most dangerous part of our route. We had no more trouble with Indians until we reached the Pahute country, that lies just east of the Sierra Nevada mountains. We were now in a very good game country, and began to kill our meat. Before this we did not dare to shoot or go any distance from the train for game, and it was not often game could be seen near the road, and while out on the scout, it was not our business to kill game.

The fight took place just below the mouth of North Platt river, and when we reached that stream, we halted and held a consultation as to whether we should go up the north or the south fork. I had drawn my scouts in, not knowing positively which fork of the Platt the company intended to go. In fifty-four we went the south fork route, because it seemed safer to go up the south fork, for that route would take us farther from the Indian country. The road leading up the South Platt was as well-beaten as the other, and seemed to be traveled as much.

Henry and I were both equally ignorant of the north route, and we did not urge it. It was finally decided to take the southern route, and we began to cross the river.

The North Platt at this point is more than three hundred yards wide, and for fear of quick sand, every driver was cautioned to keep his team going and not allow it to pause for an instant. The horses were not thirsty, and would not be apt to want to stop to drink. The river had not yet begun to rise; the melting snows of the Rockies had not yet reached this point. Each wagon was started in alone and allowed to go forty yards or more before

another started. This was done to keep the teams from crowding, and each team had two men on horseback to help the driver keep them on the move. When it came to our wagons, Henry and I let the drivers take them in two together. We felt pretty sure we could keep them on the move. My mother and Aunt Tildy rode in one wagon with Lucy's husband, Charley Crawford, while the others contained my three sisters with Billy Goodman, and one of our neighbors as drivers. I had noticed all the other wagons had crossed without any trouble, and we did not hurry them as fast as those in the lead had done, for the quick sand was not so bad as it was thought to be.

It was understood by everyone that we should camp for the night on the west side of the river, and as fast as the teams reached the shore, they were driven in line to form the usual corral.

I couldn't help feeling somewhat uneasy, but we succeeded in crossing, like the others, without any difficulty.

A half mile up the valley was a collection of houses—a trading post. This was the old stand of "Jack Morrow," an old Indian trader

and trapped. The town of North Platt City was soon after built at the same place.

When we arrived at "Point-of-Rocks" several days later, we laid by one day and hunted, to supply ourselves with meat. It was no trouble then to kill all the antelope we wanted, and soon had enough to last us several days.

I and the scouts kept up our scouting, for we never knew when we were entirely safe. We kept up the Platt until we reached the mouth of Pole Creek, then left the Platt and took up that little stream, and never left it till we crossed over the Laramie hills and came in sight of the plains on the Laramie river. Our route up Pole creek was the longest, apparently, of any stretch we encountered on the whole trip to California. It was the same winding course day after day without change, till it seemed to be never-ending.

After we passed Fort McPherson on the Platte, we saw no other sign of human habitation for some time.

By the time we reached the Plains of the Laramie, we were again out of meat, but we had now found the hunters' Paradise. I never saw game so numerous. The plains seemed alive with antelope; jack rabbits were as thick

as hens in a barn yard; cotton tails were numerous and easily killed, and were the best eating in the shape of game that we could get.

Our first night on the Plains was on the Laramie, but we had to make a very long drive to get there. Our last camp before this was on Pole Creek, at the head, and on top of the hills, and the river is some twenty miles from there. We concluded to lay over here and kill all the antelope we should want for a couple of weeks. We had plenty of salt, and having so much game around us, it was no time until more than one hundred antelope were packed away in salt in our wagons.

Our route now lay down the Laramie for one day, and then we bore off to the left, and camped one night on a stream that emptied into a rather large lake off to our right. We had passed one almost as large to our left some miles back, but did not go near it, knowing it was the wrong season for ducks and geese. We kept along this route, passing over ridges and across valleys until we reached the North Platt, and I remember we camped one night at what was called Steamboat Rock, on the Sweetwater, and another night at Pacific Spring. We were now on the old trail that

had been used for several years.

Someone had split the little stream that runs from the spring, and turned a part of the water to the Atlantic slope. Those waters were now running from each other until the whole of the continent lay between them.

It was now getting on toward ten weeks since we left home. Our provisions were getting low, but our loads were getting proportionately lighter, so we could make better time. We were all in good health; our teams were in fine order, and we made splendid progress.

There had been no casualties in our outfit since the fight back on the Platt. We were congratulating ourselves, and well we might, for barring the battle with the Reds, we had had very good luck.

We had now struck the wide sagebrush flats east of the Nevada mountains, and only for lack of wood and water, we were getting on fine. Lack of water was our greatest drawback, but we succeeded in making it through in pretty good shape.

Our last night's camp on the east side of the Nevada mountains was at Eagle Pass, the same place we had camped eleven years before,

when we had the dance, and Captain Edwards made us a speech.

After the wagons had been corralled and everything in shape, I proposed to Henry that we have another dance in the same place we did before.

“I know,” I said, “it looks a little out of place to be having a jollity now, but we have made one of the most successful trips that has ever been made, and we have some excuse for rejoicing.”

“Yes,” said Henry, “and wouldn’t it be appropriate to get up on some wagon and make the announcement?”

“Yes,” I said, “and I’ll do that very thing, now.”

So I climbed on to one of our wagons, as it was near the center, and called the attention of the crowd.

“Friends, right here where we are camped at this moment is the exact spot where we camped when Henry Zimmerman and I crossed the plains and mountains eleven years ago. The place has not changed very much since then. Right yonder between those two large pines we had a dance. Can’t we have another on the same spot of ground, and celebrate our

successful trip across the most dangerous bit of country for travelers in the known world?"

Every man and woman, or almost every one, shouted, "Yes."

After our evening chores were done, and everything in order, about twenty fiddlers got out their instruments and began to tune them up, and the dance began.



CHAPTER III.

Our Friends Reach the Hendrix Ranch and
Find Great Excitement—The Two Hendrix
Girls Have Just Been Captured by the
Indians—A Band of the Neighbors
Have Assembled Under the
Famous Captain Good
to Follow Them.

The dance continued till late in the night, and everyone was full of jollity and good humor. We stayed at this camp two nights, to let our teams rest and recruit.

The third day we pushed on, and in a few days more we made our last camp together. We camped at this place but one night, and the next morning our little outfit bade good-bye to the others and started on our last drive for home; for it was our home, Henry's and mine.

We kept along the same route we traveled in fifty-four, until we crossed the Yuba, then turned a little to the left, and camped only eight miles from the Hendrix homestead. I

was so excited I couldn't sleep. Henry was in the same fix, and we both got up and sat by the fire till daylight. My mother wanted to know why we were up so soon, and I told her we wanted to get an early start, and be there by noon, anyhow, if not sooner; that it was only eight miles now, and by starting very early, we could get there in time to have everything in good shape for dinner.

We had now only four wagons, and sixteen head of workstock, besides our riding horses, and our camp was small compared with what it had been all the way across the plains and mountains. As soon as it was light enough, Henry and I fed all the horses.

We concluded to ride in the wagon that day, Henry and I, and it was certainly a providential conclusion on our part, as will be proven later. I don't know why, to this day, that we watered and fed our horses so much more careful than we had been in the habit of doing all along; but it was certainly a good thing for our horses that we did.

We got off that morning sooner than we ever had before, and were well on our way before the sun began to shine on the distant hills to the westward. The last drive was the

most anxious one of the whole trip. I never felt half as uneasy at any time as I did that morning, and I think Henry felt equally so.

We were riding in the foremost wagon, and Henry was driving. There was no other one with us. My two married sisters and Alice were riding in the wagon next to us, and Billy was driving. The other two were occupied by mother and Aunt Tildy, and Charley Crawford was driving. There were no more bad places along the road like some we had passed, and but one more stream to cross, and that one was bridged, as we found when we got there.

We were now getting into a well settled country, compared with what we had passed through. We noticed houses everywhere as far as the eye could reach. This part of California was settled faster than the country farther north, and we began to think our claims might be taken, but they were not.

Finally we came in sight of the house nearly a mile away. We knew our friends expected us, but of course, they couldn't tell just when we would arrive. When we got nearer, we could see several men on horseback, forty or fifty, and everyone seemed excited. And upon

a nearer approach, we saw Aunt Polly and Uncle Billy wringing their hands and crying; Aunt Polly was almost screaming, and talking to the men, and jesticulating like something fearful had happened—and something fearful had happened.

Before we arrived at the bridge they discovered us coming, and Aunt Polly and Uncle Billy both knew us immediately. Henry and I jumped down and let the team come of its own accord, and ran to meet them, for they had started to meet us, and Aunt Polly hollered out: "Oh, boys, I'm so glad you've come." Aunt Polly could scarcely talk. Uncle Billy told us, in a sobbing way, that not an hour ago the girls, while riding out, had been captured by the Indians. I came near falling, and Henry was as white as a sheet. Those behind had seen something was the matter, and as our team had stopped at the bridge, they all came and left the other wagons standing, to see what was wrong. Aunt Polly had Henry and me both around the neck, and was crying and telling us about the capture of the girls.

"Henry," I said, "We must go immediately after them red imps, but first, we must introduce our friends."

By this time mother and Aunt Tildy had reached us, and no sooner than mother and Aunt Polly saw each other, they rushed into each other's arms.

I shall draw the curtain over the scene of our meeting, and proceed to inform my readers how we organized our company to follow the abductors of our sweethearts.

It seems that a couple of men, riding over a ridge just east of the Hendrix ranch, noticed a couple of women along a trail that runs along the creek that flows westward a mile north of the Hendrix homestead, and, as they watched them, a band of Indians rushed out of a clump of thick timber close at hand, and surrounded them in quick time, and the girls were prisoners. Being pretty well acquainted with the Hendrix family, they were pretty sure it could be no other than the Hendrix girls. They then rushed down to the Hendrix house as quickly as their horses could carry them, and reported the case to Mr. Hendrix, who was at the time out in his nearest field at work. The old man was nearly prostrated with surprise and grief. It so happened that a couple of old Californians had just ridden up and dismounted, and were hitching their horses at the gate, as the

two men and Uncle Billy came around the house.

"Why, hello," cried one of them, a tall dark haired man, as he came through the gate, "how are you; it has been several days since I was here last."

Uncle Billy looked at him closely, and, finally cried out: "Why, it's Captain Good," said he, and at the same time he was shaking and seemed to be ready to burst out crying. He then told the Captain and his friend what had happened to the two girls, and the Captain and his companion mounted their horses and said they would ride around the entire neighborhood and soon have a posse of men there that would overtake those "devils" and punish them for "this day's work."

So this was the crowd that had assembled at the Hendrix homestead as we drove up.

After the two men had ridden away, Uncle Billy went in and told Aunt Polly. Being a strong-minded woman, she did not faint, but turned deadly pale. She got up from the chair whereon she was sitting, and came over to Uncle Billy in a dazed kind of way, and asked what he had said. The old man could see she had understood only partly his meaning. He

then related all he knew of the affair. Then he called the two men in and had them tell the old lady all about it. All this time they were both weeping uncontrollably. When Aunt Polly understood that two men were out arousing the neighborhood, she became more composed, and in less than an hour, those men had returned with forty well-armed men, and eager for the trip.

After we had introduced our people to the Hendrixes, Henry and I mounted our horses. Billy Goodman and Charley said they would attend to everything, and we felt content to leave everything in their hands.

We crossed the creek, for the teams still stood where they had stopped at the bridge, and rode up to where the men of the neighborhood were standing when we drove up. Uncle Billy had recognized us and told the men there were two boys coming that would make an addition to their company, so they waited for us. Uncle Billy introduced us to Captain Good, and I saw one man urging his horse toward us as fast as he could, and before he reached us, Henry and I both cried out: "Howard Phillips," at the same time. And Howard Phillips

it was sure enough. We got hold of both his hands and tried to pull him in two.

"Well, boys," said he, "I am awfully glad to see you," and we were certainly glad to see him.

"Boys," said Uncle Billy, "You must take some grain for your horses, and a bite to eat for yourselves."

"And bring my children back," said Aunt Polly, as her tear-stained face was turned up to us in a beseeching way.

"Yes, Aunt Polly," both Henry and I exclaimed at the same time, "We will bring them back or never return as long as we think they are still alive."

Now the company was ready, and we started on a trip that ended a little sooner than anyone expected.

The two men that saw the Indians capture the girls were mill men that worked at the saw-mill that was situated up the East Feather, and were on their way down to the settlement on the main branch, when they saw them taken. Now, they concluded, and in fact it was, necessary that they should go with us and show us just where the capture took place. From the time those men saw the capture until we ar-

rived at the same spot, it had not been over three hours—it was now only one o'clock. We had not tarried long at the Hendrix ranch. Not more than ten minutes.

Henry, Dr. Phillips and myself rode together next to the Captain. The men that saw the capture take place were in the lead. I wanted to ask Dr. Phillips a great many questions, but it seemed to me I could not form a question under the terrible stress I was laboring under, so we rode along in silence.

It was about three miles from the Hendrix ranch to the place where the Indians were seen taking the girls off, and we got there in less than half an hour. Henry and I would have been there in ten minutes, if we had not been restrained by the Captain. He told us we had a long ride to make, and we must save our horses.

“Now, Henry,” I said, “Don’t you think it is rather providential we got up so early this morning and tended to our horses as we did?”

“It surely was, Albert,” he replied, “and if we had ridden them as we had been in the habit of doing, they would not have been in as good condition for this trip as they are.”

“No, and don’t you know that something

kept telling me,'" I said, "'That something was going to happen. Was it intuition or some occult influence that put that in to my mind? All night long, if you remember, I couldn't sleep!'"

"I know you couldn't," said Henry, "And you know we both got up at the same time, and then we built a fire and sat by it the balance of the night!"

As soon as we reached the grove where the capture took place, we found the trail, and had no trouble in following it. We could, now and then, see the tracks of the girls' horses, but it seemed as though the Indians purposely tried to obliterate those tracks. We could see also that most of the Indians were on foot, and that gave us hopes of soon overtaking them.

We pushed on, but kept a sharp lookout so as not to let them know they were followed. We were afraid that if they found they could not make their escape, without a fight, they would murder the girls, and then scatter. In that case, our quest would be hopeless. We had traveled since one o'clock, and our horses were tired and hungry. The Captain thought it would be a good plan to send on two or three

men, and let the others wait and give their horses a chance to rest and feed. This was agreed to and three men who had the best horses were chosen to go on, and if they saw the Indians, to be sure to keep out of their sight, and send one man back to report. Henry and I wanted to go, but the Captain, knowing how eager we were he was afraid we would lose all control of ourselves and precipitate matters, and that would spoil everything. So we acquiesced, and curbed our desires as well as we could, though it was a strain on our nerves.

We waited till dark, and no messenger returned. The Captain now gave orders to loosen our cinches, but leave the saddles on our horses and picket them out. Then a guard was detailed, and two men were sent to each of three different places to keep watch. One was sent ahead two of three hundred yards, and another to watch the horses, and a third to the top of a little knoll, a hundred yards to our left. All those were to take no horses, and to keep down and not expose themselves more than could be helped.

Those guards had not much more than reached their places, when one of the men that

had been sent ahead returned. Henry and I, with another man, were on this post, and halted the messenger, and he told us they had located the Indians up a conyon about eight miles away, and it was some four miles to the mouth of the conyon.

"Can you pilot us to them after night?" I inquired.

"Yes," he replied, "and can do it easily."

"Then," I said, "let's go back to camp and see if we can't get them to follow those red imps up and get them tonight." They all agreed, and we returned to the company, and the scout reported.

"If you think you can guide us to the mouth of that canyon, is there any chance for us to make a mistake by taking up the wrong canyon," asked the Captain.

"No, there is no other gulch of any size that comes into that one this side of the Indians' camp."

"Then, we will go on," said the Captain, "and not draw rein until we are in striking distance of those rascals.

We had noticed the track of a large horse that was shod, and had come to the conclusion that a white man was leading the band, and

if such was the case, we would have to be very careful, for it was more than likely he would leave nothing undone to secure their safety.

About ten o'clock we reached the mouth of the canyon, and here the Captain gave orders to leave the horses and detail four men to guard them. There was no water at this point for the horses, but we had watered them about sundown. Most of the men had canteens, and one of these was left with the guards.

"Now, boys," said the Captain, "let's move up this canyon in as quiet a manner as it is possible for us to go; and I want you two boys," meaning Henry and me, "to be right here with me, and we will go in the lead, and when I want to give a command, the word must be sent back from man to man, without any talking above a whisper."

Then he gave the word to move forward in single file. After going in this manner for perhaps one mile, we came to water, and there seemed to be plenty of grass, though it was so dark we couldn't tell positively. We all halted and he took a drink.

"Captain," I said, "how would it do to have the horses brought up as far as this water; I think there is plenty of good grass here, and

they can be staked along the creek and find grass and water for themselves.

"I think your idea a good one, Mr. Mayhue," said the Captain, "and if one of our men here will volunteer to go back, he may do so and the five of them can bring up the horses and stake them out along the creek."

The canyon all along had been bare of timber, but just at this point small bushes fringed the creek, and on both sides there seemed to be plenty of level ground, covered with grass. It was too dark, though, to see what kind it was. There are two or more species of grass in California that are totally unfit for stock in the summer.

One of the Hendrix's neighbors, an old man, was chosen, if he was willing, to go back and bring up the horses. He was willing, and started immediately. The balance of the crowd started on up the canyon.

"Where did you leave those other two men?" the Captain asked the scout, who had returned.

"Oh, we will not come to them yet for perhaps a mile," he returned.

"Where did they leave their horses?" asked the Captain.

"Right with them," he answered.

"Well; now you go ahead and find them, and tell them to come down the creek till we meet. I don't think it was a good plan to keep their horses so close to the Indian camp," said the old Captain.

Our scout went ahead then, and in a few minutes, the balance of us continued up the canyon. After proceeding perhaps half a mile, we met the three coming back, and he ordered them to take the two horses back down the canyon and tie them in the brush. "For," said he, "Those horses might have ruined us forever; if they had whinnied or made any noise, it might have given the Indians warning of our approach."

After selecting one of those men to take the horses back, he had the other two keep in advance a few steps, and then ordered the company to forward. Henry and I kept close to the leaders, and the others strung back in single file. Every man was on the "quivive." Not a sound was heard that would carry five rods. We continued in this manner a half mile farther, then we were halted.
then we were halted.

"Now," said the Captain to the scouts, "how

much farther do you think it is to the Indian camp?"

"It can't be over five hundred yards now, and I am pretty sure they have a picket out, and we may be in a few rods of them," the man replied.

"Now," said the Captain, "Two or three men must go ahead and find those guards and put a quietus on them, and don't shoot; make no noise whatever."

"Now, Captain," said Henry, "let me and Mayhue do that part of the work, for we have been in just such places before; we know something of such work, Albert and I, and you need not fear, we are too anxious to recover those girls to make any blunders."

"Your being so anxious, boys, is just what I am afraid of," said he, "and if you should make one mistake, the consequences might be terrible."

"You needn't fear, Captain," said Henry, "Albert and I have seen service in tighter places than this."

"Well, go ahead," said he, "and for heaven's sake be careful."

We assured him we would.

"Let us see what time it is," said the Cap-

tain, and taking out his watch, he got down on his knees and struck a match, and said, in an anxious voice: "Boys, we have got to hurry; it is half past two now, and it will be getting daylight before we can surprise them, I am afraid."

"Then, we will hurry on," we said, and Henry and I started in rather a fast walk, but soon toned down to a much slower gait. We knew there would be a small crescent of a moon an hour before day, and it appeared to us we could see some light in the east now.

After traversing the canyon for probably a quarter of a mile, we thought we could see, some fifty yards ahead of us, two men standing on a small elevation and concluded we had found the guard. We now redoubled our caution, but continued up the gulch very slowly. After we had crawled, we knew at least fifty yards, we could see nothing that looked like a man, or anything in the shape of a human.

"Well," whispered Henry, "We must have been mistaken; it couldn't have been an Indian we saw. Ah, I have it; look at those two stubs; that is what we saw; don't you think so?"

We were now close to them, and it was very

apparent that it was those stubs that had fooled us.

It was the aim of the Captain to keep almost up with us, for it would not do to linger; it was getting too late for lingering.

We had crawled some two hundred yards farther and saw nothing to cause us any alarm in the shape of a human being, and as we crawled around a projecting rock, there! not fifty feet away, was the camp. No horses were in sight, so we concluded they had tied their horses above the camp.

"Now, Henry," I whispered, "One or both of us must go back until we meet the men and report."

"Yes, and we will have to find where the girls are and liberate them before the fight begins," he said.

As we rested on our knees, we could see occasionally a small flicker of flame from one of the fires that lighted up the whole camp, and we were sure we could see two persons lying by one of them that looked like the girls. We could hardly keep from rushing right into the camp and fighting our way in and out again with the girls, but prudence and common sense warned us against such an act.

“Now, Henry,” said I, “if you want to stay, I’ll go and tell the Captain. This rock is a first rate guide, and you stay behind it from the camp, and for heaven’s sake, don’t make any move till I am with you again.”

We clasped hands, and said no more, and I was off. I did not go more than two hundred yards when I met them. I gave a full description of the camp.

“Now,” I said, after I had given the Captain all the particulars about the camp I could, “Henry and I are going to crawl into the camp and get those girls out, after you place your men where you want them, for it will never do to open fire on the camp while they are there.”

“Well,” said the Captain, “you may try it; I see no other way that will make it safe for them.”

We now pushed on and in a few minutes we were at the rock, and Henry was there all right. The Captain now proceeded to distribute his men. He sent ten men around to the left to go above the camp, and not frighten the horses; another ten to the left only half way up, and the balance, he kept at the point of rock.

“Now, Mr. Zimmerman,” he said, “you and Mayhue can try and see what you can do.”

All had been informed of the plan. Henry and I left our rifles at the rock, and started.



CHAPTER IV.

**Henry and Albert Crawl Into the Indian Camp
and Cut the Bonds of the Captives—The
Fight Opens Before They Reach Their
Friends—Albert Is Wounded in
the Fight—They Reach Home
the Next Day.**

We crawled along cautiously in the direction of the fire, or where the fire had been, for it was out now; where we thought we saw the girls lying. We had not proceeded more than fifty feet, when we came almost plump on to a sleeping form—not one, but three or four of them. We turned a little to the right and kept on. Our turning to the right had not changed our course materially, and in a short time, we came to the forms that we were sure were the captives; and we were not mistaken. The moon was now beginning to appear, and was giving a very faint light; we could see just a little, enough to make out two dark forms just ahead of us. I whispered to Henry to go to the one on the left and I would go

to the one on the right, and whisper, but not call her name. Just tell her to keep as silent as the grave and not stir and we would cut her bonds. We then proceeded each to our allotted task. When I reached the one I was to loosen, I bent close to her head and whispered: "Little girl, don't move; make no noise! Are you awake?" A faint "yes" reached my ears. "We have forty men around the camp, and we must get you girls out before we open fire."

All this time I was feeling for her bonds; they were behind her and tied fast. I soon had them free, and now I reached for her feet and cut the thongs that bound them.

"Now," I said, "rise to your knees and crawl after one of us, and the other will crawl behind; keep close up so you can touch the one ahead of you."

By this time, Henry had freed the one he went to, and had told her what to do. It had been agreed that as soon as the girls were free, Henry should take the lead and let them follow him, and I would keep in the rear. A cloud had obscured the moon, and it was now as dark as ever. As we were passing those forms, we had come so near running into as we were crawling into the camp, one of them

stirred and turned over, and then started up, and just then the moon came out and showed up plainly. He sprang to his feet with a yell, and I instantly shot him down, and then the ball opened.

Something tingled on my head, and I knew no more, till it was broad day; when I began to come to myself, I thought I was in Heaven. Someone was holding my head in their lap, and crying, "Oh, Albert, my darling."

I felt so happy I tried to play 'possum; but it cost me much to delay, for I knew now who it was; then I opened my eyes. "Oh, Nellie," she cried, "He's alive; he's alive!" At this I reached up and tried to put my arm around her neck, but the effort was too much—I was very weak. Then Nellie and Henry and Molly, for it was she that was holding me, lifted me to my feet.

I could see the men all standing around with eager faces, and Captain Good stepped up and said, with a bright smile: "How do you feel, young man?"

"I feel rather groggy, Captain," I replied.

I had my arm on Molly's shoulders and she and Nellie were holding me up; Henry was standing near ready to catch me if I should

start to fall. I turned to Molly, and gathering her into my arms, I began raining kisses on her lips enough to smother her, but she tried to beat me in the smothering business.

"I've got you," I cried, "and you shall never get away from me again."

Every one laughed at this, but it was in pure delight; for they all knew by this time that we were to be married in the near future.

"Now, friends," I said, "We want to be going," and as I started to walk I came near falling. A dozen hands were outstretched to hold me, but I said: "Let me try it again; I am only a little dizzy, and will soon get over it."

"I believe," I said, "that man I shot was a white man; I want to see."

We were not more than ten feet from where he lay, and as soon as I got sight of him, I said: "Why, he is the same fellow that was with the two Mexicans that got after me eleven years ago; the one, Henry! You and the girls remember."

"Yes," they said, and came and took a better look at him. Molly and Nellie had seen enough of him, but when I made this announce-

ment, they had a curiosity to take another look at the renegade.

“Do you notice that scar on his right cheek?” I asked.

They all noticed it.

“Well that is one thing I judge by, and then his general appearance proves to me that he is the same one I shot when they came abreast of me.”

“Did you get their horses?” I inquired.

“Yes, all but one or two that broke loose and made their escape.”

“Where are your horses, girls?” I inquired.

“They are all right here,” said the Captain, “and we are ready to go.”

The girls were placed on their own horses, and I was given one of the captured horses; in fact, the large horse which we supposed belonged to the white man; then we set off down the canyon, and soon reached our horses.

“Hello,” cried one of the men, as we reached them; “How did the fight turn out; we heard the shooting and wanted to be there awful bad.”

“We wiped them out,” said the Captain, “and not one of them escaped.”

Here we stayed about one hour to give the

horses a feed of grain, and take a lunch ourselves. Henry and the girls and I sat near each other and talked in low tones.

"Molly," I said, "how did you and Nellie come to be captured?"

"Why, you see, Albert, Nellie and I were riding out and never thought of danger once; we were intending to go to the top of a small peak just ahead, and while riding around a clump of thick timber and brush, we were surrounded by the most savage looking men I ever saw."

"Yes," said Nellie, "and I thought our time had come, sure; for I thought they were going to kill us right then."

"How did you find out that we were captured?" Nellie inquired.

Then we told them that two men from the sawmill up the river were coming down to the settlement and saw the whole operation, and came to their house and reported, and it so happened that Captain Good and Dr. Phillips had just ridden up, then they started immediately to arouse the neighborhood. It so happened that a large body of men were at the Davidson ranch, only two miles below, building a large barn. They had their guns with them,

and horses, too. They quit their work immediately and went to your house, about the time every one got there that had been summoned, we drove up. We had only come about seven miles from the night before last camp, and Henry and I had ridden in one of the wagons all the way and led the horses tied behind.

“Wasn’t that lucky?” said Molly, as we finished our recital.

“Attention, company!” cried the Captain, “it’s time we were on our way; we want to get home today; and your parents are almost wild about you, girls; saddle up, boys, and let’s be off.

In five minutes we were mounted, and on our way. I rode my own horse this time. Neither Henry nor I knew this part of the country, having never had occasion to come here. We were about due northeast from the Hendrix ranch, and some forty miles distant. The girls being captured about ten o’clock, and the Indians traveling until fully eight at night, so the girls said, they had ten hours, to make that distance; most of the Indians being on foot, it was good traveling.

About noon, the girls complained of being tired, and I felt pretty badly myself; my head

ached, and throbbed fearfully, so the Captain ordered a halt at a small stream that afforded a good camping place, with plenty of good grass, and also wood to build a fire, if we wanted one.

When I attempted to dismount, my head swam so I pitched forward, and fell to the ground. The girls both screamed, and Molly jumped from her horse and ran to me to help me up, but one of the men got to me first, and soon had me on my feet. I was not insensible at any time, and knew what was going on, but it seemed to me my head was as large as a barrel and equally as hard to hold up. Henry and both the girls got hold of me and while some of the men, who had blankets made me a bed, helped me to it and I laid down. The fall had shaken me up considerable, for I had fallen from the saddle.

We stayed at this camp about two hours, and by that time, I told them I thought I could ride. I had ridden my own horse from the canyon, and when I fell, he stood still. If I had been on the renegade's horse, there is no knowing what might have happened to me, for he was not very gentle. I was helped to mount, and when I got seated in the saddle, I felt as

though I could ride awhile, at least. Dr. Phillips had attended to my wound, but having nothing but handkerchiefs for bandages, he could not do very much. He, like all the balance of us, had started on the spur of the moment, and had no time to prepare anything for unlooked for contingencies.

It was getting late. We had traveled hard from our last resting place, and everyone felt pretty well worn out; none of us had slept a wink—even the girls had slept none, althought they were lying down, it was impossible to sleep. Finally, night overtook our little calvacade, but we were now in a part of the country that nearly every one was familiar with. We were going slow now, for our horses as well as ourselves were tired.

Nellie and Henry and Molly and I were riding in the lead, and were talking in low tones. The girls were telling us about the capture, and what the white man said and did during the ride.

“I’ll tell you, Albert,” said Molly, “I never was so scared in my life; why, the time we were attacked by the Indians on the plains, I wasn’t half so scared.”

“Were those Indians led by the white man?

Did he order them around like he was in command?"

"Yes, they obeyed him like well-trained dogs; every word he said, every order he gave them was instantly obeyed."

"Well, he'll never lead another band of those red rascals into the white settlements, or anywhere else," I replied.

"Did they treat you and Nellie anyway harsh?"

"No, only told us to keep still; if we made any out-cry, he would kill us instantly."

"The scar-faced wretch," I exclaimed with indignation.

It was now quite dark, and still we had several miles to go. Finally we came to the Crossing of the Creek, we had been going down for sometime, and we knew we were getting close to the home ranch.

"Only two miles now!" rang out Nellie's clear voice. "Only two miles more," and then she began to sing in a clear, ringing voice: "Home Again, Home Again." Several of those in front joined in the song; Henry and Molly's voices mingling with the others; I didn't know the song, so I kept still, and listened to the others; even if I

had known it, I felt too sick to join in the singing. Captain Good now took out his watch, and struck a match, and cried out: "Only nine o'clock! And we will be there in twenty minutes now."

After we had ridden some rods farther, someone fired a revolver, then gave a yell that could have been heard two miles; in a few seconds two shots were heard at the ranch, and nearly every man in the crowd fired his revolver. Someone had my rifle and revolver too, so I didn't shoot. Pretty soon we heard a horse galloping up the road, and Henry said: "Someone is coming to meet us." And sure enough a man stopped in the road a few rods ahead and asked if that was Captain Good's command, and I think everyone but me hollowed, "Yes." He then rode up to us, and I saw it was my brother-in-law, Billy Goodman.

"How are they all at home?" Molly and Nellie both asked in a breath. "Why Mrs. Hendrix and the old gentleman are both almost wild, and by the way, I agreed to give them a signal, so here goes." And he let off three shots with his revolver, and then gave a yell three distinct times.

"That will tell them that all is well. And is everything alright?" he asked.

"Yes, said Henry, only Albert got a crack on the head in the fight."

"A fight," said he, "and did you have a fight?"

"We sure did," we told him.

We had kept on our courses, and by this time, we had reached the barn at the corner of the fence very close to the house, and then everyone at the house cried out: "They're here." And came running to meet us. Molly and Nellie both sprang from their horses and rushed into their parent's arms. There was nothing said by any of us, but the sobbing exclamations of joy from the happy reunited family.

My mother and Aunt Tildy, in fact all of my folks, came rushing to me and Henry, and none of them had learned yet that I was hurt. When my mother saw my head in bandages, she almost fainted. Henry and I had both dismounted, and were standing holding our horses.

"Why, Albert, what is the matter with your head?" my mother cried. "Have you been wounded?"

"No, not much," I told her, "only a little rap on the head."

"Now, Albert, come right into the house and have that attended to," she said, and would not take no for an answer.

By this time the men had all dismounted, and Uncle Billy told them to unsaddle their horses and put them up and feed them, and then come in and get something to eat, for it was ready. The folks had cooked a large amount of food in case we returned that night, and when they heard the first shot, they were pretty certain it was Captain Good's outfit returning. Nothing would do but Billy Goodman must go and meet us and then a signal was agreed upon, and if the girls were along, to fire three shots and yell three times, which, as the readers know, was done. As these shots and yells were heard at the house, my mother, Aunt Polly and Aunt Tildy, as well as Uncle Billy, came near going into fits, for they knew that everything had turned out happily.

We now went into the house, and mother had me lie down, and I was almost ready to drop. I don't remember a happier lot of people than we were at that moment.

There we were, all together again, after being separated by such fearful means, and to be again all together, was sufficient cause of delight unspeakable.

Finally supper was ready, and all sat down to a substantial meal; all but me, and I was too tired and sick to care for food. I said all; mother and Molly would neither eat nor sleep until I had dropped off into a fitful half sleep.

When I awoke next morning, all the men had gone, that is those of our neighbors, except Captain Good and Dr. Phillips. Mother and Henry, with Billy and Charley, had sat up all night on my account. Nellie and Molly had been almost forced to go to bed, because they had undergone a greater strain than any of the others.

It was now deemed the proper thing for me and my mother, also Henry and his aunt to move into our own houses. My house was only a half mile north of Uncle Billy's house, and Henry's one mile below to the westward. This was two days after our return from the chase after the Indians, and I had sufficiently recovered to be of some use, though not very much.

Those of our neighbors who had come with us had settled on the river twenty miles below, and being near where we were living, one of them came up to pay us a visit. He came to the Hendrix house and inquired for the Mayhues, and Uncle Billy told him where we lived. We had just moved in that day, and were pretty badly torn up. Mother and Alice had been busy all day, for we had moved early in the morning. Billy Goodman and Charley Crawford had come with us, and intended staying here until they could find a place to locate.

When the man rode up, I knew him immediately, for it was Dick Strong, a grand-nephew of Aunt Tildy's; he had not seen his aunt yet, for they had moved down to Henry's ranch that morning. When I told him where his aunt lived, he started back to go down there, but I asked him to stay till morning; that it was a mile and a half down there, and it would be dark before he could get there.

"No, thank you, Albert," he said, "I want to see Aunt Tildy and Cousin Henry on special business and go back home in the morn-

ing." Then bidding us good-bye he rode away.

That night, I drifted down to Uncle Billy's; there was something that drew me irresistably to that particular place; I don't think he had a magnet, neither did I have much iron or steel about me, but I was drawn there all the same. Yes, on second thought, there was a magnet there; a splendid, beautiful magnet; one that could walk, talk, and sing sweeter than the Angels, I think; though I never heard an angel sing. Yes, there was a magnet there; one I couldn't resist.

When I entered the door of the Hendrix homestead that night, Molly came rushing into my arms, for she saw I had taken the bandage from my head, and knew I was much better.

The five years that Henry and I had been gone, Uncle Billy had built himself a very fine cottage, containing seven rooms. The front room was used as a general sitting room and parlor, and it was this room I had entered and met Mollie. We took a seat on a very nice sofa that ornamented one end of the room, and began to talk of something that had occupied our minds for several

years, and this was the first opportunity we had had to talk since we parted so heart-brokenly five years before. We talked for an hour or more, when Aunt Polly came in.

"Howdy, Albert," she said, "How is your head?"

"A great deal better, Aunt Polly, I am not so dizzy as I have been."

"I'm glad to hear it; that was a close call you had, Albert."

"Yes, Aunt Polly, and I'm glad it was no worse. I can never make out just how it happened; it seems to me I shot that fellow down before he had time to shoot me. and I don't remember I fired but once."

"Yes, you did, Albert," said Nellie, who had just then entered the room, "Your revolver had three shots fired out of it, and the renegade had not fired at all, because the man that got his revolver, showed it to Captain Good, and several of the men looked at it also; this man before you came to yourself."

"Well, I am at the first of that," I replied, "I have always been under the impression that the white man had shot me."

“That is right,” she said, “he did not fire a shot.

“I bade them good night just as Uncle Billy came in and asked me to stay till morning.

“No, Uncle Billy, its only a little way, and I want to be up early tomorrow, for I have lots of work to do tommrw. “The boys,” I said, meaning my brothers-in-law, “are going out to find a place for each of them to locate and I told them I would go with them, as I know the country better than they do; so good night.”

“Good-night,” said Aunt Polly. “Come when you have time, Albert.”

Molly and I had agreed to leave the day of our wedding to Henry and Nellie, which we thought they would fix on Thanksgiving, which was not a long way off.

The next morning, I went with Billy and Charley to find a location that was suitable for a ranch. I knew of several places I saw the day we started after the Indians, and took the men in that direction. I didn’t think it was very far, for I remembered passing over very fine locations for a home soon after we struck the trail of the white renegade and his Indian allies. As we were

passing by the grove where the Capture took place, I said: "Right here, boys, is the place where the girls were captured."

"So this is the place, is it," they both exclaimed. "Then how far did they travel that day, Albert?" Charley inquired.

"Between thirty-five and forty miles," I answered.

"That was good traveling," said he, "and the girls, how did they stand the ride? I don't suppose their captors stopped once to rest, but wanted to place as many miles as possible behind them."

"Yes, and Molly told me she never was so tired in her life."

"No wonder," said Billy, "the anxiety tired the poor girls as much as the ride."

We had ridden on during this conversation, and pretty soon came out on to a beautiful timbered flat, large enough for two or three good homesteads, and the boys both exclaimed at once: "This is the place for me; I'm satisfied to stop right here, and go no further."

We then began to meander around over the flat, taking in all its advantages, and picking out suitable locations to build. After riding till near noon, my brothers-in-law

concluded to build down on the creek, where a fine location for a house, or in fact, two locations were found, and there we dismounted and picketed our horses and took our lunch.



CHAPTER V.

**The Two Boys With Dr. Phillips Go Hunting
and Kill a Large Grizzly and a Deer.**

A Double Wedding. The End.

In the afternoon, after we had rested and talked the matter over in regard to improving their ranches, we mounted our horses and returned home. My mother and Alice had just returned from a visit to see her "old friend Polly Davenport," as she always called Aunt Polly.

I had a large pasture, and we kept our horses there when not in use.

That night, I told mother that Henry and I would have to go and file on our land, or somebody would get ahead of us. Billy and Charley would have to do the same, but they would have to get the numbers first; so they could not go with me.

The next morning, I saddled up and started for Henry's place. Henry and I had talked the matter over in regard to filing some time before, and as I rode up to the Hendrix

house, I saw Henry coming up the road from home; he was on his way to see me on the same business. We both dismounted and went in and caught the women in suds up to their elbows. My head was now about well, and I felt like romping, so I caught Molly and tried to sit her down in the tub of soap suds, or at least, I made believe I would, but I got fooled in that undertaking, for the first thing I knew, I had my head sowsed in almost to my shoulders.

"Why, Molly," said her mother, "You have got Albert all wet and covered with soap suds."

I didn't get wet only my head, for I kept stooped over; then Molly caught up a towel and began scrubbing my head as hard as she could.

"Now, young man," said she, "You'll try to baptize me in soap suds again, will you?" And all the time she was rubbing with all her might.

"Oh, Molly," I yelled, "don't rub my head off."

All this time Nellie and Henry were laughing at us, and urging Molly to "rub hard; scour him good; he needs it; his head is

awful dirty." Finally she got tired of scrubbing and said: "Now, Albert, I think I've got all the dirt off, if not most of the hair." Then she almost screamed, "Oh, Albert; that scar on your head; I never thought of that; Oh, how inflamed it looks." She was almost ready to cry. Aunt Polly, Henry and Nellie all examined my head, and said, "it didn't look bad." It didn't hurt, and so I didn't care.

We had agreed, Henry and I, to go the next morning to Sacramento to do our filing; but that evening Henry and Nellie set the day of our double wedding, and that was the following Thanksgiving, five weeks hence.

We were all needing a supply of groceries by this time; so that night when I got home, I spoke to mother about it, and called in Billy and Charley from their tents to consult them about going to town to lay in their winter supplies.

"Now, boys," I said, "its going to be pretty bad weather soon, and now will be a better time than later on." So they concluded to take two teams and go with us as far as Marysville to make their purchases.

The next morning, we started out, Henry

and I, and Billy and Charley; Aunt Tildy came up to my house to stay till Henry got back. The two of us rode our horses, for we intended to go to Sacramento; we also took our money; that is, our certificates to deposit them. We still had nearly all the amount we fetched from California; we had not spent more than one thousand each, and the money my mother received for her place also was included.

Before we started from the Hendrix home, Molly and Nellie both gave us errands to do for them. They wanted several articles amounting to quite a bundle by the time we got them all together. Henry was at Uncle Billy's when we got there, and as soon as they gave us the bill to fill for them, we started. When we arrived at Marysville, it was after dark; we went to a stable and put up our horses, then repaired to a hotel not far away.

The next morning, Henry and I struck out for Sacramento, and left the boys to do their buying and return home at their leisure. We intended to buy what the girls wanted in Sacramento, as that town had a larger assortment of goods than Marysville.

We arrived at the City in due course of time, and went directly to the Land Office. After transacting our business there, we next went to the Bank and deposited our drafts, and by sun down, we had everything ready to start back in the morning. We had traveled a nearer route, in coming down, but in going back, we concluded to go past our old friends, the ranchman where the two outlaws died ten years before.

We got an early start, intending to reach home that day. After making our old friend a short visit, but on reaching the aforesaid ranch, our disappointment was great upon learning that he had sold out a year ago and moved to another part of the country. The old gentleman wanted us to 'alight' and stay till dinner anyhow. We thanked him, and said we wanted to reach home that day, and rode on.

It was after night when we arrived home; Henry came on up with me, for there was no one at his house, as his Aunt Tildy was staying at my house while we were away. When we rode up, a horse was hitched at the gate that I thought I knew, and on going in,

I found Dr. Phillips, and we greeted each other with a hillarious shout.

My brothers-in-law did not get back till the day before we did, on account of their heavy loads. I wondered what had brought the Doctor there, but soon learned there was a magnet at my house now that attracted him. The Doctor was now only thirty-three years old, and was only twelve years older than Alice, and she was the loadstone that attracted him. Well, I didn't care; Howard was a good fellow; had a splendid practice and also a good home of his own. I soon convinced mother that the Doctor was alright and she was satisfied.

"Yes, mother," I said one day, when we had been talking on the subject, "the Doctor is as fine a man as can be desired, and when you loose Alice, you will gain a daughter-in-law that will fill her place to a nicety." She laughed at this, and said she thought so.

After Henry and I had done our fall's work, and laid in our winter feed, what little we needed, for the winters of California are not like the country we came from; there is always some feed for loose stock all winter; we concluded to take a hunt and go up

to our old camp at Edwardsville. Dr. Phillips had told us the camp was deserted, and had been for some time. Our wedding was not to come off till Thanksgiving, and it was yet early in October. We had talked to Dr. Phillips about our hunt, and he had agreed to go with us, so the evening before the time set for our start, he came over with a light wagon, and then we had him turn his horses in the pasture, and Henry and I each furnished a horse, and took the Doctor's wagon.

We arrived at the old camp of '54 about the middle of the afternoon of the second day, and found a terrible desolate place. The cabins were rotting down; the ground had been all dug or washed away, and some of the cabins had been removed in order to get at the pay dirt. Long ridges of clean gravel and boulders were heaped up, and grass had started in the interslices, and in course of time, these ridges would be hidden by vegetation. We found one old cabin, one that Henry and I had built for ourselves in '54, still habitable. This cabin we appropriated for our use as long as we stayed in that neighborhood. The little creek was still

flush and clear, but we could see no trout, and we thought it was because the mud that was set moving while mining had driven them below. After we had established camp, I slipped off and paid a visit to Jake Wamslies grave. The trees had all been cut, Manzanita had sprung up everywhere, and I couldn't tell precisely where the grave was; the ground had become level, and grass covered everything that was not covered with brush. In searching around, I found a small piece of very rotten board; there were no marks on it of any kind, but I was pretty sure that it was the same board I had placed at Jake's grave the day we buried him. I sat down on a nearby rock, and fell into a reverie; it was a dream of the past; I could see everything just as it happened; I could see the old Captain, and hear the monotonous drone of his voice as he read the burial service. I could hear the sharp report of the volley we fired over the grave, and the quiet sobs of the women, as we turned to retrace our steps to the cabins. I was so absorbed in my thoughts of the past that I did not notice anyone approaching, when I heard foot-steps within a few feet of me, and on

looking up, there stood Henry and the Doctor smiling at me.

“A penny for your thoughts, Albert,” said the Doctor.

“My thoughts are worth more than a penny, Howard; I have been dreaming of the past, and do you know, it seemed as though I could see and hear everything we said and did at the burial that day so long ago?”

“Why, is this the spot where we buried Jake?” said Henry.

“I think it is, Henry, ain’t this the board we placed at the head of the grave?” I asked, as I held it out toward him.

“It may be,” he replied, “that board, Albert, was yellow poplar; you know it was a piece left of one of the side boards the coffin was made of.” I then took out my knife and on cutting off the decayed part of the wood, found that it was yellow poplar.

“That is the board alright,” said the Doctor, “where did you find it?”

“Right here,” I replied, “you can plainly see where it lay and it stuck slightly to the ground, it had lain there so long.”

I began whittling the board, and when I got enough smooth surface to do the writing I wanted, I wrote the following notice: "Here is the spot Jacob Wamsley was buried, on August the 15th, 1855; he was killed by the Indians." There was a good sized Manzanita bush standing, as I thought, about where the head of the grave might be; I sat the board up against it and piled a few rocks around it to hold it in place. We returned to camp, and began to prepare our evening meal.

The next morning after attending to our horses, and when we had eaten breakfast, we started out on the same route Henry and I had taken the day we discovered the Indian raiders ten years ago. The under-brush had increased to some extent, and rendered traveling more difficult than when we first traveled that way. We concluded to separate and each man take his own course, but not lose the Doctor, for he was not acquainted with the country as well as we. Henry and I could make a kank-shell out of our hands, and the Doctor could whistle on his fingers, so we agreed to keep each other posted as to our whereabouts. Henry and I had our Henry rifles, and Phillips had only a

muzzle-loader. We agreed to separate so as to leave the Doctor between us; so Henry took to the left and I to the right.

I had gone on my course some four or five hundred yards, and crossed over a little gulch, and was ascending the hill on the opposite side, when I saw something up to my left that looked like an old grey blanket hanging on a limb close to the ground. I stopped and bent over to get a better view, and just as I did so, the thing moved; then I knew I had found a grizzly, and a very large one too. When it moved, I could see its head, but too many limbs were in the way to make a sure shot, so I took quick aim, and fired at its shoulder. It let out a tremendous bellow and started directly for me. There was a small bushy oak tree standing near me, and knowing a grizzly is very hard to kill, I made a spring and landed four or five feet into that tree and climbed up six or eight feet farther. I had my gun with me, and knowing a grizzly can't climb, I felt safe. I hadn't reached a safe distance from the ground any too soon, for Mr. Bruin was at the foot of the tree only a second too late to grab me. He was now so close to me I

had a good chance to examine him; he was the largest of his kind; I think he would have weighed fully twelve hundred pounds. I wished Henry and the Doctor could have seen him. I thought at first I would call them; then I was afraid they might think I was afraid to try to kill him myself, so I refrained from calling. Now I concluded to kill him if I could, and not shoot him all to pieces.

I made him try to reach me, by climbing down a little, and when he raised up on his hind foot, I let drive at his nose. This only increased his anger, for the bullet had only creased his forehead; then I tried it again and did almost as bad. Just then, I heard a shot not more than two hundred yards off; this determined me to make quick work of my job, and I fired again at one of his hind legs; this brought him down, but he was up again and roaring in a fearful manner. I fired again at the other hind leg, and again he fell, and began crawling off down the hill away from me as fast as he could. He thought it was time to leave that dangerous locality. I slid down from the tree as quickly as possible, and took down the hill after

him; but just as I was about to shoot again, I heard a "Hello" over on the opposite side of the gulch. I answered immediately, and on looking up, saw Dr. Phillips coming down the opposite hillside.

"Hello, Doc," I yelled, "I got him, but don't get too close; his fore-feet are good yet; both hind legs are broken; but he's got lots of fight in him yet."

Then I told the Doctor to give him a shot in his forehead; he did so and by the greatest chance, killed him instantly.

Henry had killed a fine buck about a quarter of a mile away, and dressed it and hung it up. He heard the shooting and thought I had got into trouble, and as soon as he hung his game up, started in the direction of the shooting.

While the Doctor and I were dressing our bear, we heard a "Hello" off to the west a little way, and answered it, then pretty soon, we saw Henry coming down the hill toward us.

"Well, well," he exclaimed, "you've got him, and a large one too; how many times did you have to shoot to kill him?"

"I shot him five times, and Howard shot

him once, and made a finish of him,'" I replied.

After taking out the entrails, we gathered up a quantity of dead brush and limbs of trees that had been broken off; we piled them alongside the huge animal and attempted to roll him on to the brush to get him off the ground, but we might just as well have tried to roll an elephant; we could not turn him over.

It was not yet noon, and we were not over one and a half miles from camp, so one man agreed to stay and keep off the birds and animals that might prowl around, while two of us went to camp after the horses and wagon. Henry agreed to stay, and the Doctor and I went and soon returned with the team and an axe; also all the ropes we had. As soon as the wagon stopped. I took the axe and cut two poles and placed them on the side of the wagon box, and let the lower ends stick under the bear as far as I could. I told the boys to try and work one of the ropes under the bear, and I thought we could roll it up by the help of the horses. When everything was ready, the horses were started, but the poles slid, so we had to cut

notches in them to catch on the side of the bed, and then when we tried it again, we succeeded in getting him into the wagon.

On reaching camp, Henry took one of the horses and brought up his deer; by that time it was three o'clock, and we had gone all day without our dinners. After we had eaten a lunch, we intended to hang the bear up, but we might as well have tried to hang up one of the horses. We concluded finally to take the hide off and quarter him up. This we did, and by sundown, we had our meat all hanging up.

"Henry," I said, just before we were ready to retire, "how would it do for us to get off before day tomorrow morning, on account of our meat. What do you think of it, Howard?"

"Why, it's just the thing we should do," they both declared; so it was arranged that we would start about three and that would give us time to get home before dark. By half past three the next morning we were off; and just at sundown, we drove up to my house. Nellie and Molly were both there, and when they found how well we had done, they congratulated us on our success. When

I told mother and the girls about my being treed by a bear, they all laughed at me for climbing.

“Why,” said Molly, my oldest sister, “why didn’t you keep shooting? You had your repeating rifle.”

“I’ll tell you, Molly, if you had been there, you would have taken wings and flown away like a wild turkey, if you had been able; you see those big grizzlies are very hard to kill, and that is just the reason so many men get killed by them.”

“Why! do people get killed by bears?” she inquired.

“They surely do,” I said, “and some times a very small one gets the advantage of the hunter, and chews him up.”

“Well, Molly, let’s you and I go,” said Nellie.

“And let’s you and I go, Albert,” said Henry. And away we went the four of us; we were not so frolicsome as we used to be, but we were still full of fun, so we started in a run, and kept it up nearly the whole distance to the Hendrix cottage. We stayed till bed time, then returned to my house.

It was now drawing close to our wedding

day, and we began to make preparations. Henry, the girls and I took a trip to the City and purchased everything we wanted for the occasion. We went to the theater that night; the first one we had visited since landing in California.

My sister, Alice, and the Doctor were to be married the following Spring; we wanted them to have their wedding the same day day with us, but they didn't think they could get ready. The Doctor was building a new house, and wanted the cage completed before he caught his bird. Henry and I worked away at our several occupations until the fateful day rolled around.

And now the day was at hand; our neighbors had all been invited. Captain Good had been especially invited; he was up in Oregon at the time, but got the word finally, and made his appearance in good season. Some two or three weeks before the wedding, we heard of old Captain Edwards, and sent him word to be sure and be on hand; he knew the place alright, and lost no time in coming. The wedding was to take place at two o'clock, then dinner at four. Then a dance as long as we were willing to fatigue ourselves.

Aunt Polly and mother acted as though one was going to lose her daughters for good, and the other her son. They were glad and sad by turns. It was a fine assembly; everybody was well dressed; there was no ill-feeling and everyone was happy.

And now the hour was at hand. Two very pretty young ladies acted as bridesmaids, and Howard Phillips was my groomsman, and a young fellow of the neighborhood acted for Henry; he was one of the scouts that was sent ahead when we followed the Indians.

Marriage is something one will never get accustomed to, as one marries so seldom. I was fidgety all the time, and could see that Henry was also; he would talk a few minutes with Nellie; then wander off somewhere and stand and gaze at something abstractedly, as though he was pondering a subject that puzzled him.

The guests were now arriving by the dozens; our neighbors, most of them. They greeted us with hillarious shouts. "Hello, Albert; Hello Henry," was their mode of greeting. All of the girls of the neighborhood were well acquainted with the Hendrix girls, who were great favorites of theirs.

We were now called in by "Squire Roberts," the brides and grooms, together with the bridesmaids and groomsmen. We took seats at one side of the large parlor; Molly and I on the right, and Nellie and Henry on the left, which would be to the right of the Justice. Finally we were told to arise to our feet, and come a few steps forward.

Mother, Aunt Polly and Aunt Tildy; Uncle Billy, Captain Edwards, Dr. Phillips and my sisters were all crowded in one corner to the right of the Justice and facing us.

The house was crowded; a great many couldn't get in at all, but most of them were at the windows, the sashes of which had been raised, and were looking in; everyone seemed to be greatly interested. The fact is, Henry and I were looked upon as heroes, as we had come right from the "war." And then followed a band of Indians and crawled into their midst and rescued a couple of girls, that were sweethearts of several years standing. It was enough to excite some curiosity at least.

The Justice began first with Henry and Nellie, and as soon as he had sworn them to

be true to each other, and love and cherish one another, he turned to Molly and I. I could feel that she was trembling, and on looking into her face, I saw she was very pale; I whispered, "Courage Molly!" My voice was only a whisper, but it seemed to arouse her, and she faced the old Justice with more composure. The knots were tied; we were man and wife.

As soon as we took seats, Captain Edwards made a rush for us, and shook our hands heartily, and then insisted he must kiss both the brides, which was done as soon as spoken. At the same time, our own people crowded around us and wished us much joy, and all the blessings the human race was heir to.

By this time dinner was ready. A large table had been erected outside in the shade of some young trees; the weather was warm for the time of year, for this year, as sometimes happens in California, the rains had not set in.

As soon as dinner was over, all the furniture was taken out of the parlor, and dancing commenced. We enjoyed ourselves till a late hour, and then those that lived near went home, except our own family, and Cap-

tain Edwards, Dr. Phillips and Captain Good.

And now my story is ended. You have seen how my Comrade and I passed through many dangers; how the Captive Maidens were rescued, and the Prizes won.

THE END.

Read me twice, and you will love me thrice.



N6
1915

Alice Shutesman

